■ News / A4

Little stories seen and heard in the street of protest

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Erap's 'Sonia' calls for setting up caretaker gov't

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Noli says he decided to stick with GMA to avoid chaos

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FPJ leader on way to rally dies in motorcycle-van collision

■ Sports / A27

Lance leaves lasting legacy with 7th title

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Drilon: 2nd most-watched person at the Batasan

ANG GALING UMARTE!

By Volt Contreras

AN APPLIANCE store salesman, glued to yesterday's State of the Nation Address, couldn't help himself and "pinched" the cheek of

DRILON/ A22

GMA brings House down: 5 ovations, 33 applause

By Juliet Labog-Javellana

THE RECEPTION of government-invited guests to President Macapagal-Arroyo's State of the Nation Address yesterday was as rapturous as that accorded a star.

Thirty-three rounds of applause, with five standing ovations, greeted Ms Arroyo's

GMA BRINGS/ A8

GMA high on Cha-cha

But she's silent on 'Gloriagate,' political crisis

By Christine O. Avendaño

IT WAS her State of the Nation Address, but President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday made no mention of the political crisis that has gripped the country for more than a month now.

Instead, she sounded the call for Charter change, and pledged to push ahead with her economic and fiscal reforms at "whatever political cost."

She said the country was able to achieve economic growth of more than 6 percent last year and to generate four million jobs in the last four years even amid the increase in global oil prices.

But while Ms Arroyo urged action on the constitutional change espoused by her chief allies—Speaker Jose de Venecia and former President Fidel Ramos—she was silent on the time frame. She merely said it should be done, and "the sooner, the better."

She also went as far as to state her preference for a constituent assembly to tackle the amendments, as well as for a shift from the presidential-unitary to a parliamentary-federal form of government.

"It's time to start the great debate on Charter change," the President said in the much-awaited speech described as the shortest she had ever delivered in her four years in office.

GMA HIGH/ A8

IN THE MOOD for jubilation, that is President Arroyo and House Speaker Jose de Venecia are. But not quite Senate President Franklin Drilon. *(More pictures on Page A21.)*

EDWIN BACASMAS

EDWIN BACASMAS

TOGETHER, of course. The President with daughter Luli, touted as her secret weapon in the battle for the hearts and minds of the people.

Only 42 file impeach case, others under wraps

By Michael Lim Ubac

UNABLE to oust her through street protests, opponents of President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday took their battle into the legal arena.

Forty-two lawmakers of various political stripes filed an amended impeachment case in the House of Representatives, accusing Ms Arroyo of cheating and bribing her way to victory in the 2004 election, benefiting from gambling payoffs, hiding real estate property in the United States and complicity in the murder of political dissenters. *(See specifics of the complaint on Page A6.)*

"If the President becomes a lawbreaker, she breeds contempt for the law," they said in their complaint. "She invites every person to become a law unto herself. She invites anarchy."

The 42 who finally endorsed the complaint came from different parties but their number was woefully short of the 79 signatures—or two-thirds of the total House membership—needed to propel the case straight to the Senate for trial.

On the eve of the filing, some opposition legislators had trumpeted they had secured the commitment of at least 67 House members, or just 12 short of the "Magic 79."

Rep. Darlene Antonino-Custodio confimed that the minority had won the commitment of 67 lawmakers, as reported by the INQUIRER, but said their identities would be kept under wraps until all 79 required signatures had been gathered.

"We have to protect their names right now so that the majority will not harrass them," Custodio said. "In one to two weeks, we will be able to gather 90 to a hundred signatures."

Ms Arroyo thus became the second sit-

ONLY 42/ A6

Protest rained out across the nation

By PDI Bureaus

OPPOSITION vows to rain on President Macapagal-Arroyo's State of the Nation Address (Sona) yesterday did not happen at the capital, but real downpours scattered protesters before they could assemble in the Visayas and Mindanao.

Crowd estimates ranged from a few hundred to several thousand. *(See photos in Across the Nation, Pages A18 and A19.)*

In Iloilo City, around 3,000 rain-drenched protesters marched from two assembly points before converging at the Iloilo Rotary Amphitheater.

Umbrellas mixed with a sea of placards and streamers as the protesters called the President "*tuko*" (gecko) for clinging to power.

Activists danced to the hit "Hello Garci" tune. They also lambasted "RG," referring to their fellow Ilonggo Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez whom they called a "*tiki*" (lizard) for his controversial snipes against those calling on the President to resign, including former President Corazon Aquino and her daughter, Kris Aquino.

Police briefly detained a farmer for

PROTEST/ A21

Defensor's wife stands out in Sona fashion

By Fe Zamora

OOPS, wrong color.

No matter, Julie Defensor, wife of Environment Secretary Michael Defensor, stood out in her Paul Cabral gown. *(Photos on Page A12.)*

"But I didn't know," Ms Defensor groaned that peach was the color adopted by the opposition to dramatize their call to "im-peach" President Macapagal-Arroyo. Defensor's husband just happens to be one of the President's staunchest defenders.

A single peach rose in a vase was placed on the desk of each opposition congressman. Most of

DEFENSOR'S/ A12

Opposition mounts biggest rally yet

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr., Blanche S. Rivera and Norman Bordadora

IT WAS the biggest rally against President Macapagal-Arroyo so far.

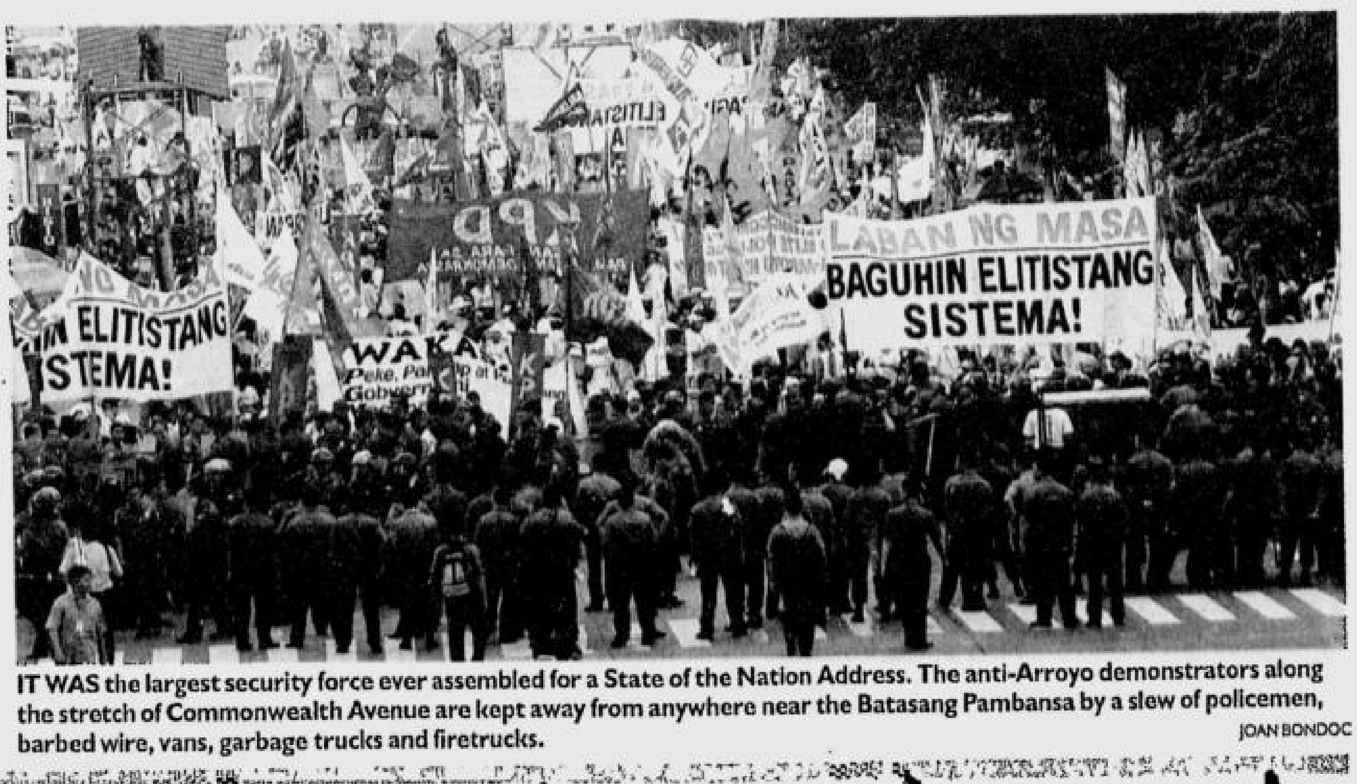
Organizers placed at 80,000 the number of people who joined the protest rally on Commonwealth Avenue about a kilometer from the Batasang Pambansa where Ms Arroyo delivered her State of the Nation Address (Sona).

A police official said only 35,000 attended the demonstration demanding the President's resignation. The INQUIRER placed the figure at 40,000 to 60,000.

Despite the various estimates, both police and organizers of the protest agreed that it was much bigger than the rally on July 13 on Ayala Avenue in Makati City.

The rally was the latest in a series of daily protest actions against Ms Arroyo, stemming from allegations that she cheated in last year's election when she called an election official to discuss vote counting before she was declared winner. The President has apologized but

OPPOSITION / A21



IT WAS the largest security force ever assembled for a State of the Nation Address. The anti-Arroyo demonstrators along the stretch of Commonwealth Avenue are kept away from anywhere near the Batasang Pambansa by a slew of policemen, barbed wire, vans, garbage trucks and firetrucks.

JOAN BONDOC

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Southern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao will experience monsoon rains. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms mostly in the afternoon or evening.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY ERIKA A. SARMIENTO, PDI RESEARCH/07/26/05

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Rains
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Rains
Tagaytay	Rains	Zamboanga	Rains
Legazpi	Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Rains
Calapan	Rains	Davao	Rains

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Second FRONT PAGE

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GMA Sona good news to business

Vow to push reforms 'whatever the political cost' to boost markets

Doris C. Dumlao
and Gil Cabacungan Jr.

SOLDIERS in armoured personnel carrier guard the Batasang Pambansa compound in Quezon City Monday.

LYN RILLON

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo's vow to continue economic reforms and fiscal discipline "whatever the political cost" during her State of the Nation Address (Sona) yesterday is seen to bring good tidings when financial markets reopen today.

Currency and stock traders said such an assurance, at this time of political turbulence, would cheer the markets, given that the resignation of key economic managers led by then Finance Secretary Cesa Purisima had cast doubts on Ms Arroyo's ability to make tough decisions.

Also helpful was the lack of disruption in the metropolis' peace and order situation, which hung like a cloud of doubt before markets paused for the long weekend.

Forex on a positive note

"The (foreign exchange) market should open on a positive note since the day went by without untoward incidents. Also, the effect of the yuan revaluation last Thursday – which should have made the peso appreciate if not for the Sona concerns – may now happen," said Jose Emmanuel Hilado, president of foreign exchange association ACI Philippines.

However, he said the peso's upside would still be limited by prospects of a protracted political stalemate.

"The impeachment process must be out of our way before we could move on," Hilado said.

Astro del Castillo, president of First Grade Holdings and a director of the Securities Analysts Association of the Philippines, said the commitment to pursue reforms alone despite the political challenges was a big plus for the President.

"We're satisfied with what we heard but we'll keep an eye on how the reforms mentioned will be pursued," he said.

Del Castillo said the stock market would likely perform well today, helped by the revaluation of the yuan and the rise in shares of blue chip Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. in New York Friday night.

On the pre-need law

Jonathan Ravelas, chief strategist of Banco de Oro Universal Bank, agreed that the president's speech was "acceptable" to the markets, allaying fears that the country might backtrack from fiscal reforms.

"It shows that the president could be part of the solution to the problem and that it's now up to Congress to move on the Charter change," he said.

Ravelas said the President's mention of the need to push for a pre-need law also indicated that her administration had not lost its focus on economic reforms.

Bankers Association of the Philippines executive director Leonilo Coronel said it would take more than a single speech to convince investors to flock to the Philippines.

"Personally, I don't think the presidential system is working for us, given the nature of local politics and the struggle within the parties," he said.

"Investors invest in different forms of government. What is important for them is that we'll do what we said we'll do," Coronel added.

Charter change?

Philippine-US Business Council chair Ramon del Rosario Jr. said the call for Charter change "does not address the issues of leadership and legitimacy."

The first test, he said, was the reinstatement and full implementation of the E-VAT. The second is the President's pursuit of the campaign against tax cheats that former Bureau of Internal Revenue Commissioner Guillermo Parayno had effectively implemented with good results, Del Rosario added.

In her Sona, Ms Arroyo reassured investors of her determination to trim the fiscal deficit by collecting more taxes and cutting down on costs to finally turn the Philippines' economic potential into reality.

"With investors both here and abroad in mind, I invite you all to join me in sending them a strong message from this great hall: We will not waver in our commitment to economic reform and fiscal discipline, whatever the political cost," the President said.

Not only is Ms Arroyo committed to undertaking the pressing fiscal reforms, she has also made economic matters a key motivation for her proposal to fast-track constitutional change.

"We must address such questions as how much more government is needed for the greater safety and economic security of our people, and how much less government is more conducive to free enterprise and economic progress," the President said.

Titanic struggle

To emphasize her commitment to the E-VAT and other fiscal form measures (sin tax increase and attrition law), the President described her lobbying to push this bill in Congress as a "titanic struggle to enact the three laws that comprised the fiscal package in our history, the biggest revenue increase in a generation (at least P100 billion a year) that will break the vicious cycle of financing development by borrowing and having to borrow again just to service those loans."

In her speech, she underscored three times how the economy had been poised for a takeoff – citing the six percent economic growth she created – amid the biggest oil price hikes in history.

"Our story on the verge of take off is real. Analysts need only to look at our stock market and even the peso-dollar exchange rate to sense the strong anticipation of significant improvements. If only we would overcome the tendency to be our own worst enemy," Ms Arroyo said.

The President also voiced her concern on the impact of the political crisis on economic growth. "While there's no avoiding partisan politics, there can be a determined effort to limit the collateral damage on a country poised for takeoff."

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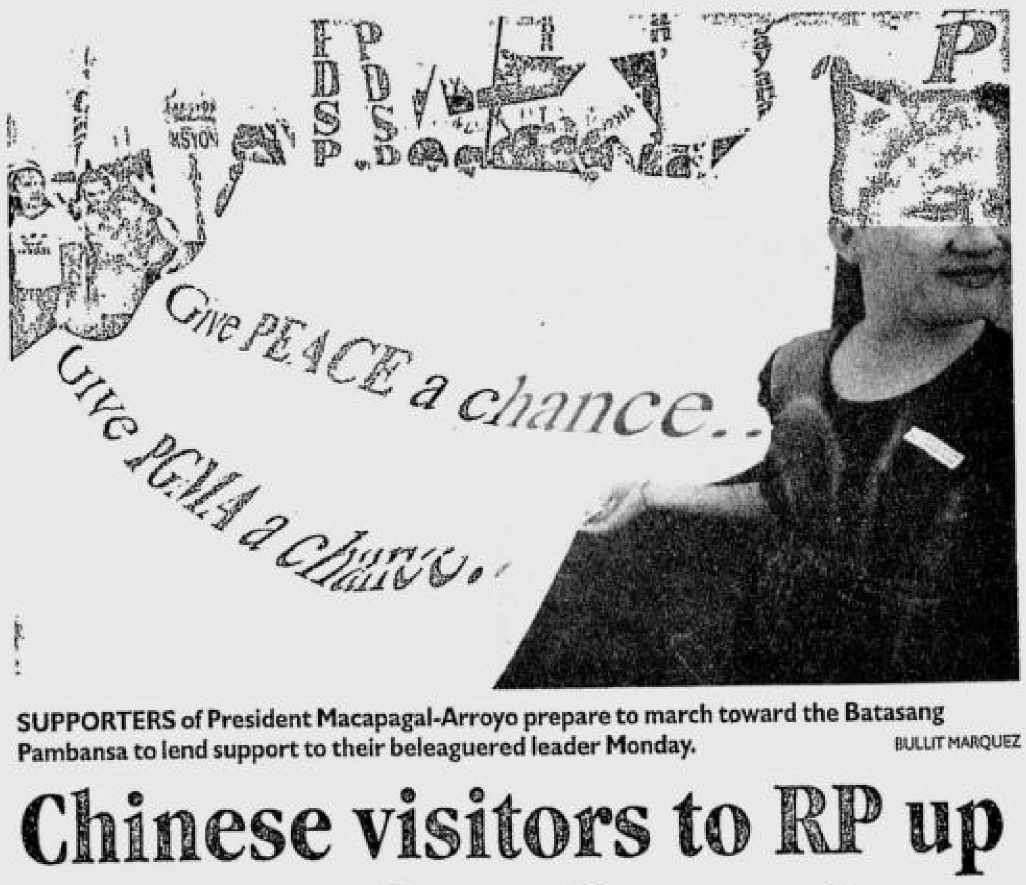


Give PEACE a chance..
Give PGMA a chance.

SUPPORTERS of President Macapagal-Arroyo prepare to march toward the Batasang Pambansa to lend support to their beleaguered leader Monday.

BULLIT MARQUEZ

Chinese visitors to RP up 150% in first 6 months

By Jerome Aning

CHINA has again proven to be the Philippines' fastest growing source of inbound tourists with a 146.3 percent increase in arrivals in the first half of this year.

According to the Department of Tourism statistics, there were 41,793 tourist arrivals from China between Jan. 1 to June 21 compared to 16,966 who arrived in the same period last year.

DOT Secretary Joseph Ace Durano said China had become one of the country's top sources of foreign travelers, ranking seventh after the United States, South Korea, Japan, Hong Kong, Taiwan and Australia.

"These results are indeed encouraging for us to further intensify our operation in China. Not only that, we are also very optimistic that we will be able to sustain this success with our current and future marketing campaigns," he said.

To keep the numbers up, DOT's China marketing team, headed by Assistant Secretary Eduardo Jarque Jr., has pushed for priority policy support here in the country.

The department's promotion efforts focus on a market of about 1.5 million Chinese found around Beijing, Shanghai and Guangzhou, who work in multinational corporations and who are familiar with the Western lifestyle.

The target group is made up of young, single or married, English-speaking and city-based professionals who are incentive travelers – those sent abroad by private companies and the government as a reward for their performance.

One of the most effective programs was "Meet and Assist" which caters non-English-speaking tourists like the Chinese, Koreans and Japanese. It was recently launched by the DOT at international airports in Manila and Cebu.

Also designed for Chinese visitors was the innovative "Visa-Upon-Arrival" program made possible with the cooperation of the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Bureau of Immigration.

There were also training programs for Mandarin-speaking guides.

In addition to the DOT office in Beijing, a marketing representative based in Shanghai was appointed last July 15.

The DOT is targeting 70,000 Chinese tourists this year, a small fraction of the estimated 20 million Chinese annual outbound tourists, making China the world's largest travel market.

Erap calls for caretaker gov't in Tanay 'Sonia'

ESTRADA: Will he be part of the proposed transition government? AFP

By Norman Bordadora

FORMER PRESIDENT Joseph Estrada, from his house arrest in Tanay, Rizal, yesterday issued his own version of the state of the nation, accusing President Macapagal-Arroyo of stealing the presidency, causing the suffering of Filipinos and fomenting corruption and abuse.

In a statement, dubbed the "state of the nation in spite of Arroyo" or Sonia, the deposed Estrada, for the first time, called for the establishment of a transition government to be composed of "representatives from various sectors of society" and the institution of a "blueprint for a viable Philippines."

"I call on (the people) to establish a caretaker government that will represent the various sectors of society and will serve honestly and with dignity. Because of the problems faced by the country, not one person can handle the task of governing a fragmented nation," Estrada said.

Estrada's Sonia was read to the throng of anti-Arroyo protesters on Commonwealth Avenue by his son San Juan Mayor JV Ejercito right after Ms Arroyo's own State of the Nation Address (Sona) and the opening of Congress.

The protesters called for the President to step down and had burned a lizard effigy of Ms Arroyo.

Estrada's spokesperson, former Maguindanao Rep. Didagen Dilangalen, won't issue a categorical statement on whether the former President would favor being part of the caretaker government but added that he would abide by what the "national interest" dictates.

"President Estrada has always said that he is for the national interest. Whatever it takes to serve. But then his being in detention in Tanay makes it difficult for him (to do so)," Dilangalen told the INQUIRER.

Asked if Estrada would consider being part of the caretaker government if it's for the sake of national interest, Dilangalen said: "(He'll) cross the bridge when he gets there."

Dilangalen said Estrada's call for a caretaker government showed the urgent need for change, something that the impeachment process at the House of Representatives won't achieve.

"The opposition congressmen can (pursue the impeachment process). (But) the situation requires immediate action," he said.

Dilangalen said participating in an impeachment process would only recognize "nonchalantly" the legitimacy of Ms Arroyo's presidency.

In his Sonia, Estrada said Filipinos must prepare for the future and unite under a "blueprint for a viable Philippines" which he said was being drafted by "some of our countrymen."

"This is a country that needs to be saved from poverty, chaos and destruction. I solemnly call on our countrymen to come together and cry out to Ms Arroyo that she step down from the position she has grabbed and give back the authority to the people," Estrada said.

"Only this will give us peace," he added.

The caretaker government the deposed President is calling for would "definitely be composed of anti-Arroyo forces," Dilangalen explained quoting Estrada.

"Why come up with a (transition government) composed of people closely identified with the Arroyo administration?" Dilangalen added.

Dilangalen said the Estrada "blueprint" would include some of the former President's economic policies when he was still in Malacañang, but with some modifications.

Another clandestine military group surfaces, wants GMA to quit

By Dona Pazzibugan

ANOTHER clandestine group in the military vowing to oust President Macapagal-Arroyo has surfaced.

Calling itself the "Protectors of the Filipino People," a group claiming to be made up of soldiers aired a statement through a video shown in an ABS-CBN news program Sunday night.

The group said they could not remain neutral, and called, not only for the President's resignation, but also for a "radical transformation" of the political system.

This came two days after a supposedly revived Young Officers' Union issued a manifesto saying it was breaking from its 1995 peace pact with the government and called on the President to resign.

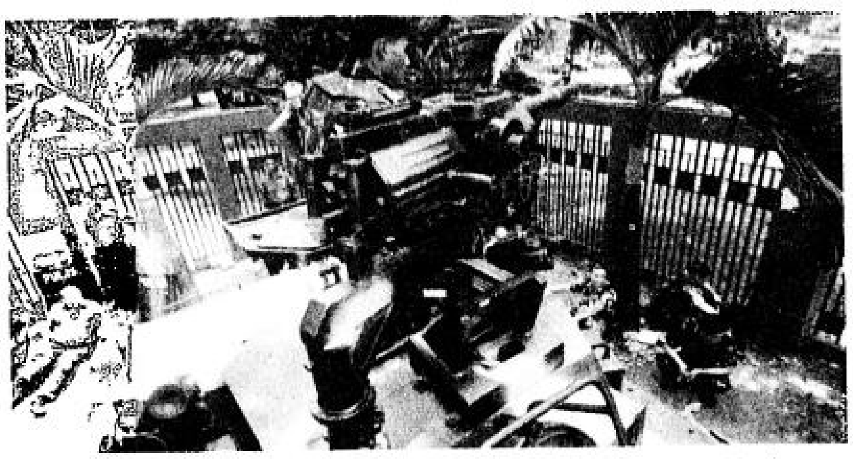
Brig. Gen. Danilo Lim, former founding chair of the YOU, disowned the statement but said the AFP leadership should listen to its junior officers.

The video featured a man in the shadows standing in front of a Philippine flag and another flag which appeared to be the group's insignia – a rising sun behind two mountain peaks enclosed in a triangle.

The man's face was covered with a black cloth and around his left arm was a red armband with an insignia.

Off-camera, another man and woman alternately read a statement titled, "Protectors of the Filipino People," copies of which were e-mailed to some reporters yesterday morning.

"Our leaders in the military call upon us to remain neutral and apolitical, but we cannot stay neutral and apolitical when the sovereign people have spoken," they said, apparently referring to surveys showing that majority of Filipinos want the President to resign.



A SOLDIER sits on top of an armored personnel carrier parked inside the grounds of the Batasang Pambansa in Quezon City Monday. AFP

They said they had decided "to join the Filipino people in their call not only for a change in leadership, but for genuine and radical transformation in our political system."

They were not "messiahs," they added, but "servants of the people."

Another statement from the "Protectors of the Filipino People" was e-mailed to reporters yesterday afternoon.

It said: "We have established for a fact" that Ms Arroyo committed massive fraud in the 2004 presidential polls.

It also warned "those who are actively working to conceal the truth" on behalf of the President.

"No mercy shall be extended to those who insist on their evil ways even after this warning," the group said.

They added that they would take "extraordinary" action if the President did not resign voluntarily.

"For every day that she stays in office only narrows down the options available to us until we are left with the inevitable. Extraordinary situations require extraordinary solutions," the statement said.

The AFP was stumped on where the video and the statements had come from.

Lt. Col. Buenaventura Pascual, AFP public information chief, admitted they had no inkling of who were behind this latest group.

He dismissed the statements as "propaganda" and doubted if they were made by real soldiers.

"We haven't monitored anything so far. I can't comment if they are real soldiers," Pascual said.

He said the military should no longer intervene as it did in the Edsa 1 and 2 "People Power" revolts against former presidents Ferdinand Marcos and Joseph Estrada, respectively.

Pascual said the impeachment process should go through its entire length.

"The bottom line is, we do not want to intervene [so] that democratic processes will have a complete resolution over this case, over this political turmoil," he said.

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NOT FOR PRESIDENT'S SURVIVAL

Noli: I stayed with GMA to save country from chaos

By Cynthia D. Balana

VICE President Noli de Castro congratulates President Macapagal-Arroyo after she delivered her State of the Nation Address. LYN RILLON

VICE President Noli de Castro yesterday said his decision to stay with President Macapagal-Arroyo during this crisis was meant to save the country from further chaos – not to ensure Ms Arroyo's political survival.

Speaking to reporters just before the start of the President's State of the Nation Address (Sona) before a joint session of Congress at the Batasang Pambansa complex, De Castro said he was willing to face the consequences of his decision to maintain his political alliance with Ms Arroyo.

"Ako'y tapat sa ating bansa at sa mga bumoto sa akin. Hindi ko ito ginagawa para sa pangulo kundi para sa ating bansa (I remain loyal to the country and to the people who voted for me. I am not doing this for the President but for our country)," he said.

De Castro said he knew leaving the political alliance would worsen the people's economic woes because he had been personally in touch with many of them as vice president, housing czar and presidential adviser on price monitoring and overseas Filipinos.

"Ang panawagan ko lang, sana kahit tayo magkagulo pulitikal, huwag nating kalimutan ang tungkulin ng pamahaan sa kanila (I am appealing to everyone,we may have our political differences, but let's not forget our duty to the government and the people)," he said.

When informed that people in the streets protesting the President's Sona were also demanding for the resignation of Ms Arroyo and her vice president, De Castro said this was to be expected from the radical opposition.

"Siyempre kailangan nilang sabihin iyon para may dating (They have to say this so there's impact)," he said.

'Middle forces' tie white ribbons

By Volt C. Contreras

TIE a white ribbon in your home, vehicle, or workplace if you want the President to resign.

It was a campaign launched on Saturday by "The White Ribbon Movement," a group of religious leaders, professionals and academicians who have added their voices to the rising calls for President Arroyo's resignation.

WRM convenor Marco delos Reyes said his group was the same alliance of "middle forces" who poured into the streets during the Edsa II uprising that toppled the Estrada presidency in 2001.

Other convenors include Bro. Edmundo Fernandez, FSC and Sr. Mary John Mananzan, OSB; Dr. Minguita Padilla of Rx Emergency: Gloria Resign NOW! and SINAG; Atty. Nasser Marohomsalic of Committee for the Defense of Liberty (Codal) and United Moros for Morality and Truth (Ummat).

"We have come forward to refute the lie peddled by Malacañang that the silent majority is on her side. We share the sentiments of the people that Arroyo must resign or step down," Reyes said in a statement at the WRM's launch in La Salle Greenhills.

At the launch, Bro. Armin Luistro, FSC, gave the welcome remarks in behalf of La Salle brothers, one of the first non-political groups to call for Ms Arroyo's resignation following scandals over jueteng and the "Gloriagate" tapes.

Reyes said the white-ribbon campaign suits "those who are not yet ready to go to the streets" as it is a "less militant but nevertheless progressive form of airing their demand and have it heard by Malacañang and the people."

"The color white symbolizes our stand for truth, integrity, renewal and hope – the very values and principles that the President has tainted and apparently forsaken. It is also a message for Ms Arroyo to surrender to the will of the people," added Reyes, also the president of the University Student Council of the University of the Philippines in Diliman.

Also present at the launching were National Artist Napoleon Abueva, UP Aware convenor Dr. Joi Barrios, scientist group AGHAM Chair Dr. Giovanni Tapang, Medical doctors Carol P. Araullo, Eleanor Jara, Reynaldo Lesaca, Eduardo Clemente, former Labor Undersecretary Amado Gat Inciong, Prof. Mila Aguilar of Bangon Philippines, Dr. Elmer Ordoñez of IBON Foundation;

Protestant church leaders Rev. Sam Torres of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines (UCCP), Rev. Erah Maga-Cabillas of the National Council of Churches in the Philippines and Iglesia Filipina Independiente; Rev. Ranieh Mercado, UCCP;

Medical Mission Sisters, Religious of Good Shepherd sisters and Benedictine sisters, and faculty members, student councils and organizations from various schools.

'Baywalk Bodies' cheer up pro-Gloria crowd

By DJ Yap
and Jocelyn R. Uy

IT TOOK only a few swaying and gyrating from the Baywalk Bodies to elicit cheering from the crowd.

The pro-Arroyo demonstrators on Commonwealth came alive when the sexy members of the singing group sang – or lip-synched – their hit single, "Kiliti."

Before then, Ms Arroyo's supporters had been generally listless, under the searing heat and humidity, as they listened to political leaders.

At the beginning of the program, for instance, the demonstrators only stared while those on stage sang the national anthem.

Ferried by jeepneys from various barangays and neighboring cities, the crowd was estimated at 13,000 by police as of 3 p.m.

The demonstrators were also generally unresponsive when their leaders expressed support for the embattled President Macapagal-Arroyo, who was about to deliver her State of the Nation Address.

But when three members of the Baywalk Bodies came on stage, people rushed forward. Kids scampered, and even policemen turned to watch. The crowd cheered as the group sang: "Wag dyan, wag dyan. May kiliti ako diyan, wag dyan."

They sang three numbers before leaving. Organizers also invited other performers, including "Star in a Million" finalist OJ Mariano.

The Baywalk Bodies wore identical 'police'-style sleeveless tops, short skirts and high boots. They had nothing to say about what the rally was for.

The pro-Arroyo group occupied the front area of the Commission on Audit building, just several hundred meters from Ever Gotesco where a bigger number of anti-Arroyo protesters converged.

They listened in silence as Ms Arroyo delivered her Sona, and vowed to fight for the rule of the law.

Addressing the crowd Quezon Mayor Feliciano Belmonte said the people should fight for due process. He defended Ms Arroyo against her accusers, saying she had never admitted to rigging the 2004 polls.

However, signs of "hakot (busing)" were evident, with "marshals" handing out attendance sheets to be signed. Children as young as four or five scampered about, while teenagers composed the bulk of the crowd.

A dozen buses of the California Bus Lines ferried residents of Maricaban, Pasay City to the Batasan Complex to show their support for Ms Arroyo, said a police official who requested anonymity. The buses were allowed to proceed to Quezon City at 12:15 p.m.

A certain "Nova," allegedly working for Pasay City Rep. Connie Dy, mobilized the more than 800 Maricaban residents.

The residents were reportedly given P250 and a grocery voucher each in exchange for their presence at the rally. Those from Barangay Payatas in Quezon City each received two to three kilos of rice.

The passengers on board the 12 buses were allegedly the same people who joined the opposition's rally in Makati on July 13. However, the organizers were different.

Organizers said "hakot" was not the issue, since many rallies were like that anyway.

Melvin Mitra, spokesperson of People's Action and Response Against Corruption, said it was unfair to focus on allegations of paying off Arroyo supporters.

He said his group championed the Constitution and would accept whatever outcome of any impeachment proceedings.

Apolonia Tolentino of the Kilusang Mamamayan para sa Matatag na Republika said Filipinos should focus on how to support Ms Arroyo's programs, and shun political bickering.

FPJ backers tell cops they were going to GMA rally

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr

HOUSEWIFE Curacha, 49, and her neighbors in Caloocan City quickly folded the streamers they were carrying and hid them under their seats.

And when policemen briefly inspected the passenger jeep they were on, they said they were headed for the rally in support of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Their group, however, went straight to one of the two anti-Arroyo rallies on Don Mariano Marcos Avenue (formerly Commonwealth Avenue), almost a kilometer away from the Batasang Pambansa where Ms Arroyo delivered her State of the Nation Address (Sona) yesterday.

Why the sudden change of destination?

"Nagpanggap kami na pro-Gloria *dahil maraming pulis na nagtatanong kung saan kami pupunta* (We pretended to be pro-Gloria because a lot of policemen were asking where we were going)," Curacha said.

She and her friends endured the brief drizzle when they arrived, as well as the intense heat in the afternoon.

"Nandito kami para pababain si Gloria (We're here to ask Gloria to step down)," Curacha said, eliciting cheers from her friends.

She and her friends, who were ferried by three jeeps from Bagong Silang in Caloocan City to the rally site, joined the almost 5,000 protesters under the Laban ng Masa umbrella group, which held a separate rally from the bigger group of Bayan Muna and supporters of the late actor Fernando Poe Jr.

"Hindi kami bayaran(Nobody paid us)," another protester Mylene, 39, and mother of three children, also said.

Instead, she joined other anti-Arroyo protesters in yelling at the buses full of what looked like pro-Arroyo protesters wearing white shirts, which passed by on the other side of the road.

She said they were offered to join the huge pro-Arroyo rally a week ago at the Luneta Park. But they refused the P200-offer, even if it came with a bag of grocery items.

But while they eluded the policemen by posing as pro-Arroyo protesters, their other neighbors separately got on passenger jeeps to avoid being checked.

"Sabi ni Gloria *pauunlarin daw niya ang bansa. Pero bakit nagugutom pa rin kami* (Gloria said the nation would progress. So why are we still hungry)?" Mylene asked.

Two of her children are still in school while her eldest had already graduated—but is jobless. Her husband died last year.

While she and her friends were complaining of worsening poverty, others were content in taking advantage of the rallies and earning some money.

While protesters showed up with their anti-Arroyo streamers, market vendor Danny, 50, came with a bag of newly printed shirts.

In front, the shirt had what looked like a regular cassette tape, with the face of Ms Arroyo on the right side and the face of a Commission on Elections official on the left.

At the back of the shirt is a picture of Poe's widow Susan Roces and Ms Arroyo, with the words *"Hindi ko tanggap ang iyong* sorry (I don't accept your apology)!"

He sold the shirts at P100 each. He prepared 60 pieces.

The stretch of the road also teemed with other vendors yesterday, selling *buko* juice, fish balls, soft drinks, mineral water, candies, cigarettes, towels, fried bananas and fried *lumpia*.

Hacienda Luisita workers brave checkpoints to attend demo

By Blanche S. Rivera

SOME 200 workers from Hacienda Luisita, where seven workers were killed and around a hundred were injured in a violent dispersal last year, braved the checkpoints in Central Luzon and boarded commercial buses to join the rally.

Among them was Andres Valdez, whose eldest son Jessie was shot and beaten to death allegedly by military and police at the Luisita workers' picket line on Nov. 16.

Valdez, 54, marched quietly from UP Diliman, his expression stoic and his purpose clear: to add strength to growing anti-Arroyo protest.

He could not care less about the tape allegedly proving that President Macapagal-Arroyo cheated in the presidential elections. His reason for walking from Diliman to Ever Gotesco on Commonwealth Avenue under the intense noon sun was more personal than political.

"Matanggal lang si GMA, *hustisya na yun para sa anak ko... Dapat silang magbayad sa inutangan nila ng buhay* (The ouster of GMA is justice enough for my child. They should pay for the lives they took," Valdez told the INQUIRER.

Eilekrenes C. Mañano, 19, learned about political persecution when her 23-year-old brother Isaias, Anakpawis coordinator for Oriental Mindoro, was killed in the province in April last year.

Mañano, a graduating social work student of Miriam College, is now with the Concerned Students for Justice and Peace, a group that joined Bayan's delegation yesterday.

"Even if you're an ordinary person, you would feel the pressure and oppression from the State, and you can't help but get involved," she said.

She said her brother's death merely confirmed her political convictions and strengthened her determination to seek justice for all victims of state violence.

"It will give me some relief if GMA is ousted. It's a step-by-step process. Unseating GMA is not the answer, but it is part of achieving my goal for my brother," Mañano said.

Militant groups led by Bayan had vowed to stage a Sona rally bigger than the anti-Arroyo protests in Makati two weeks ago.

As of 12 noon yesterday Bayan secretary general Renato Reyes estimated the crowd marching to Ever Gotesco mall to be at least 20,000.

Bayan's southern Tagalog and central Luzon teams composed most of the warm bodies in yesterday's rally.

Barangay Mapalacsiao Councilor Joey Romero said the Bayan delegation from central Luzon filled up five buses, but the checkpoints forced them to return to Tarlac.

Some went back while others transferred to commercial buses with barely any money, he said.

"I only have P100 in my pocket... I don't know how long I will stay here, but I want to stay as long as I have to," Romero said.

Arman Albarillo, 27, who led Bayan's southern Tagalog delegation, said Ms Arroyo's much-vaunted sacrifice of exiling her family was nothing compared with the deprivation felt by those whose family members were killed by the military.

"She sacrificed little. Her family is not here now but they will be back with her. I know many families who will never see their members again because they had been killed," Albarillo said.

Albarillo's father Expedito was shot several times, his left eye removed, and his mother was shot in the head in San Teodoro, Oriental Mindoro in March 2002.

His youngest sister, then nine years old, witnessed how their parents were dragged to a deserted area and killed allegedly by members of the 204th Infantry Brigade under the notorious Gen. Jovito Palparan.

"I could understand my father's fate because he has been actively working for the people, although he is not a member of the NPA as they claimed. But what they did to my mother—there is no forgiveness for that," Albarillo said.

"I am not counting on the government to give me justice, but I want to help other victims by educating them on the kind of government we have," he added.

Albarillo said at least 109 Bayan members and supporters in southern Tagalog had been killed since Ms Arroyo assumed the presidency in 2001.

Pinoy found dead in Saudi desert

THE DEPARTMENT of Foreign Affairs (DFA) is looking into the death of a Filipino worker whose body was found in a Saudi Arabian desert.

The body of Alfrand Ravara Magcanan was reportedly found in the eastern province of Hofuf in Saudi Arabia, according to the ABS-CBN Middle East Bureau.

"We're currently checking the report with our embassy in Riyadh," DFA spokesman Gilberto Asuque said in a phone interview.

The report quoted Philippine Ambassador to the Saudi Arabia, Bahnarim Guinomla, as confirming the recovery of Magcanan's body.

Asuque said the DFA had received information a couple of weeks ago that Magcanan had been reported missing by his employer. *Nikko Dizon*

Missing RP engineer found

By Nikko Dizon

THE BODY of a Filipino engineer who went missing after a bridge construction accident at the Mekong River in Thailand has been recovered.

Frederick Guerrero Napasa's body was identified by his wife, Rudjen, on Sunday night, DFA spokesperson Gilberto Asuque said, quoting reports from the Philippine Embassy in Bangkok.

Napasa's wife is being assisted by an attaché of the embassy's consular section, Asuque added.

The remains of Napasa, who was initially declared missing following the accident, are now in a hospital morgue in Thailand.

The embassy is closely working with project contractor, Sumitomo Company of Japan, for the repatriation of Napasa's remains, Asuque said.

An earlier report from the DFA had identified Napasa as Federic Guerrero Natasa.

A Japanese engineer was killed instantly when a crane being used in the construction of the bridge collapsed on the Thai side of the Thailand-Laos border in the northeastern province of Mukdahan last Friday.

Thailand's Bangkok Post reported that eight were killed in the accident, with two workers still missing. Ten others were also reported injured.

Gov't-MILF panels postpone peace talks in Malaysia

KUALA LUMPUR—The Philippine government and MILF rebel negotiators are not ready to proceed with peace talks due to have begun on the weekend, forcing a postponement, Malaysian organizers said Monday.

"Both parties were probably not ready to proceed. They need to iron out some other things," a Malaysian official told AFP, declining to reveal the issues still to be resolved.

The talks between the Philippine government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), aimed at ending a decades-old Muslim separatist rebellion in the southern Philippines, were scheduled to begin Sunday.

They will likely resume within the next one or two months, the organizing official said. "They are likely to proceed. Both parties are determined to pursue peace," he said.

Malaysia has been mediating peace talks between Manila and the 12,000-strong MILF, a Muslim rebel group that has been fighting for more than two decades to set up an Islamic state in the southern third of the Philippines. AFP

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The amended complaint for impeachment

HERE is a condensed version of the amended complaint filed in the Lower House yesterday for the impeachment of President Macapagal-Arroyo:

RIGHTEOUSNESS exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people. ....

This is a verified complaint to impeach and bring to trial Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, President of the Philippines, for her Culpable Violations of the Constitution, acts of Bribery and Graft and Corruption, and Betrayal of Public Trust.

General Allegations:

I. [She] committed culpable violations of the Constitution, making a mockery of the people's right of suffrage and trampling on the basic constitutional principle that the Philippines is a democratic state, when:

A. She undermined the independence of the Commission on Elections.

B. She directed and/or knowingly allowed the commission, and is the chief beneficiary, of electoral fraud in numerous vote-rich areas in the country, conniving or conspiring with, if not coercing, or at the very least knowingly allowing ... officials of the Comelec, the police and the military to ensure her victory in the May 2004 presidential elections.

II. [She] betrayed the public trust:

A. She obstructed justice by attempting to delay, impede, cover up and conceal or otherwise impair the verity, authenticity, admissibility or legibility, of evidence in the congressional investigation, and all other present and future criminal investigations, in the charges of various offenses against her and other persons; and by making, presenting or using a false or tampered audio recording, with knowledge of its falsity and with intent to affect the course or outcome of the investigation of, or official proceedings in, criminal cases; and by giving false or fabricated information to mislead or prevent Congress and the law enforcement agencies from apprehending perpetrators of certain crimes; or fabricating and disseminating information to mislead or impede the process of such investigations.

Concealed property

B. She deliberately concealed ownership of various properties—located in the Philippines and overseas—and business interests pertaining to her and First Gentleman Jose Miguel "Mike" T. Arroyo, and willfully failed to pay the taxes due on these properties and the income derived from them.

C. She acquiesced in and provided impunity to the killings of political dissenters, or infringed their freedoms of expression and assembly.

III. [She] incurred liability for bribery and graft and corrupt practices:

A. She approved contracts that were manifestly and grossly disadvantageous to the government including the NorthRail and the Piatco NAIA Terminal III projects.

B. She accepted "jueteng" payola from jueteng operators, directly and/or indirectly, through her family members and other agents, in exchange for political protection. She also used the jueteng payola to bankroll her presidential campaign, and to bribe officials such as Comelec Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano and his cohorts .

Buying votes

C. She used, acquiesced in or knowingly allowed the use ... of government offices, agencies and funds immediately before and during the election period ... to buy votes and unlawfully promote her candidacy, as illustrated in, but not limited to, the PhilHealth and road users' tax projects, the abolition of the Southern Philippines Development Authority and the downsizing of the National Electrification Administration.

Specific Allegations:

I. [Culpable violations of the Constitution]

A. She undermined the independence of the Commission on Elections.

- [She] appointed to the Comelec as Commissioners Mr. Virgilio Garcillano and Mr. Manuel Barcelona, Jr.—persons identified with partisan politics or with electoral anomalies, or who do not possess the qualifications laid down for the high public office.
- Commissioner Garcillano was given such a free hand in the administration of the Comelec that ... he reshuffled election officers in Mindanao and put in their place his own men, and this despite the fact that officially, he was supposed to be the Comelec officer in charge of Regions 4 and 5 and not of Mindanao.

'Even kidnapping'

- Consequently, Commissioner Garcillano was in actual control in Mindanao as revealed in the "Hello Garci?" audio tapes ...
- Snatches of the conversations, traced to some 15 calls, dealt with a concerted effort to rig the elections.
- The conversations happen to contain incriminating admissions of bribery, graft and corruption, electoral fraud and even kidnapping.
- On May 26, 2004 [she] directed Commissioner Garcillano to "delay" the "senatorial canvassing until after the voting on the rules tonight ... Delaying the canvassing is an election offense.
- On May 27, 2004 [she] asked Commissioner Garcillano whether the Election Returns and the Statement of Votes in Sulu "correspond" with each other and whether they are complete;

Bribe offer

- She violated Article 210 of the Revised Penal Code (on Direct Bribery) ... which punishes a public official and the person who induces him to [commit a crime] in consideration of an offer, promise, gift ... " The promise is the reappointment of Commissioner Garcillano to the Comelec.
- On May 28, 2004, [she] authorized, approved, or acquiesced to the use, or an attempt to make use, of the military, particularly, a certain Gudani, and Generals Esperon and Kyamko, in partisan political activity favoring the President;
- On May 29, 2004, [she] ... made it clear to Commissioner Garcillano that her lead "cannot be less than one M" to which the latter replied thus: *"Pipilitin ho natin yan."* This is electoral fraud ...
- On May 31, 2004, [she] uttered the words *"yung dagdag, yung dagdag"* in her conversation with Commissioner Garcillano with respect to the Namfrel copies of certain Certificates of Canvass; Her act violated the Code of Conduct and Ethical Standards for Public Officials and Employees, which requires public officials to refrain from "committing acts contrary to law, morals, public policy and public interest."

Instructions to Garci

- On June 2, 2004, [she] instructed Commissioner Garcillano to make sure that the Statements of Votes and the Certificates of Canvass in Basilan "match";

On June 7, 2004, [she] was informed by Commissioner Garcillano of the efforts to abduct a certain Rashma Hali from Tipo-Tipo, Basilan, who was set to testify for the opposition "so that we can control her";

- On June 10, 2004, [she] informed Commissioner Garcillano of a problem in the canvassing in "South Upi" and instructed the latter to make sure that *"ang importante, na hindi madamay yung sa taas ..."*

II. [She] betrayed the public trust:

- She deliberately concealed ownership of various properties and business interests pertaining to her and her spouse.
- In her Statement of Assets and Liabilities and Net worth filed in February 2001, [she] indicated that as of Dec. 31, 2000, she and her spouse owned real properties with an acquisition and improvement cost of P3,537,837.00 and personal and other properties totaling P58,375,239.03.

US property

- The real properties she declared in her SAL were a house and lot in Baguio, a residential lot in Antipolo, a commercial lot in Tayabas, Quezon, and agricultural lots in San Rafael, Bulacan and Nasugbu, Batangas.
- She also declared that her spouse had business interests in 3 companies: LTA Inc. and LTA Realty both based in Makati City, and JJ Agricultural Corp. based in Bacolod City.
- The SALN deliberately omitted various real and personal properties to which she and her spouse held title, as well as numerous business interests that her spouse maintained.
- Some of the properties that she deliberately omitted from the SALN include:

++Various real properties and the money realized from the re-sale of several of the same located in California, USA, acquired and managed though LTA Realty Corp., which include: a five-story apartment building on 737 Bush St., San Francisco, CA; a condominium unit on 1176 Sacramento St. corner Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco, CA; a residence on 2425 Tipperary Ave., San Francisco, CA; a building on 727 Gellert Blvd., Daly City, CA; and a 24-room building on 151 Austin Street, San Francisco, CA.

++A 60,758-square-meter parcel of land located in Caloocan City covered by TCT No. 153151 and titled to Jose Miguel T. Arroyo married to Gloria M. Arroyo.

Killing of dissenters

++Cash in BPI Family Bank Makati-Perea Branch Account No. 661-5-00497-7 in the name of Jose Pidal but actually owned and controlled by Mike Arroyo.

- The business interests of Mike Arroyo that were deliberately omitted from the SALN include:

++As incorporator/stockholder: DM Press Inc., Raco Trading Phil. Inc., Trans Realty Co. Inc., Aviatica Travel and Management Corp., Eva Development Corp. (where she is likewise a stockholder), and Pacific Mint International Corp.

++As lawyer: JMA Agricultural Development Corp. and Alaja Agro-Industrial Corp.

C. [Human rights violations]

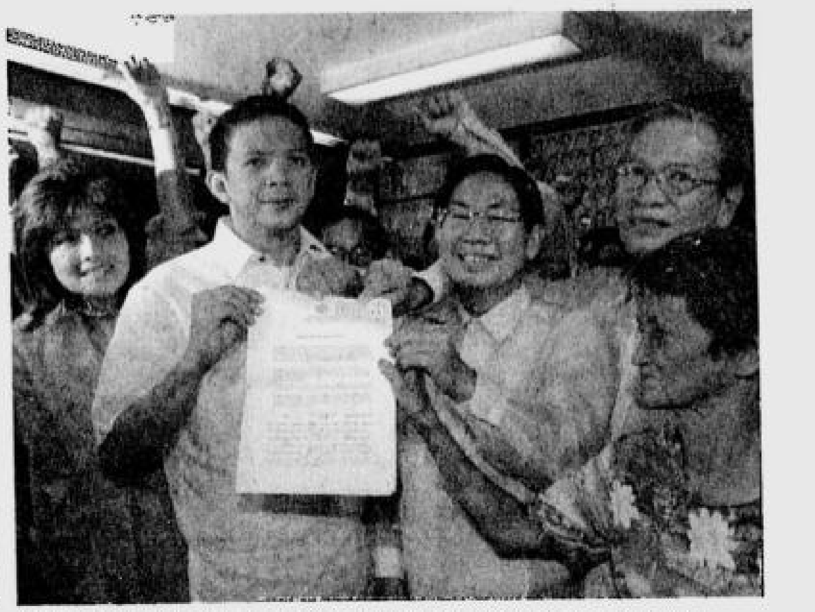
- Since she assumed the presidency, the human rights organization Karapatan has recorded 293 cases of killings of 411 persons through assassinations, summary executions and indiscriminate firing. In the same period, 130 persons became victims of involuntary disappearance, 245 persons were subjected to torture, and 1,563 persons fell victim to illegal arrest. The vast majority of these cases were allegedly perpetrated by members or agents of the AFP.
- [She] has knowledge of the pattern of human rights abuses ... The victims' kin and/or the survivors themselves have directly informed her of the same. In fact, a two-page ad was published in the Philippine Daily Inquirer ...

'Notorious general'

- Then Col. Jovito Palparan, who ... would subsequently become one of the most notorious Army general under the Arroyo administration, was charged with massive human rights violations when he was assigned as Brigade Commander of Oriental Mindoro in 2001.
- [She] not only failed to investigate Col. Palparan, she even promoted him to Brigadier General ... In 2005, [she gave him] a bigger command [and promoted him] to Major General ...

III. [Bribery and graft and corrupt practices]:

- She accepted jueteng payola from jueteng operators through her family members and other agents.
- First Gentleman Arroyo and Congressman Arroyo, with her prior knowledge and consent, ordered or influenced officers of the law to restore jueteng operations in various provinces.
- In exchange for her silent approval of the jueteng operations, she received, through Mr. Mike Arroyo and Congressman Mikey Arroyo, and other individuals, monthly jueteng payola amounting to at least P1,000,000.00 per region.
- Worse, she also used this illegal money to bankroll her presidential campaign in 2004 and finance massive electoral fraud including vote buying, bribery of Comelec officers.



HERE IT IS. Minority leader, Chiz Escudero (left), lawyer Oliver Lozano and Rep. Satur Ocampo show off the impeachment complaint which they filed at the Office of the Secretary General in Congress Monday morning. Also in photo are Rep. Imee Marcos and Carmen "Lola Mameng" Deonida (right). LYN RILLON

List of complainants

FOLLOWING is the list of complainants in the impeachment case against President Macapagal-Arroyo:

- Lawyer Oliver O. Lozano, lead complainant
- Representatives Francis G. Escudero (Sorsogon), Ronaldo Zamora (San Juan), Rolex Suplico (Iloilo), Darlene Antonino-Custodio (South Cotabato), Imee Marcos (Ilocos Norte), Erico Basilio Fabian (Zamboanga City), Roilo Golez (Parañaque City), Teofisto Guingona III (Bukidnon); Agapito Aquino (Makati), Juan Edgardo Angara (Aurora), Jacinto Paras (Negros Oriental), Rodolfo Plaza (Agusan del Sur), Alan Peter Cayetano (Pateros-Taguig), Ruy Lopez (Davao City), Justin Chipeco (Laguna), Joseph Santiago (Catanduanes);

Party-list Representatives Satur Ocampo (Bayan Muna), Florencio Noel (An-Waray), Eulogio Magsaysay (AVE), Rafael Mariano (Anak Pawis), Crispin Beltran (Anak Pawis), Joel Virador (Bayan Muna), Teodoro Casiño (Bayan Muna), Liza Maza (Gabriela), Loretta Ann Rosales (Akbayan), Mario Aguja (Akbayan), Ana Theresa Hontiveros-Baraquiel (Akbayan), Joel Villanueva (Cibac) and Mujib Hataman (Amin);

Organizations: Bayan Muna, represented by its chair, Dr. Reynaldo Lesaca; Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas, represented by Danilo Ramos; Migrante International, represented by Concepcion Bragas Regalado; Counsels for the Defense of Liberties, represented by Remedios Balbin; Anakpawis, represented by Carmen Deunida; Gabriela, represented by Emerenciana de Jesus; Gabriela, represented by Cristina Palabay;

PlunderWatch, represented by Dr. Carol Pagaduan-Araullo; Karapatan, represented by Marie Hilao Enriquez; National Peace Conference, represented by its secretary general, Elizabeth Yang; Kasapian ng Dukha at Maralitang Mamamayan ng Meycauyan, represented by Laura B. Cas; Kasapian ng Pagkakaisa at Ugnayan sa Longus, represented by Joel Lacsamana; Buklod ng Maralitang Tagalungsod ng Malolos, represented by Felisa Pattugalan; Samahan ng Maralitang Biñan 1 & 2 Taga-riles ng Bocaue, represented by Victoria Mendoza;

Lamparang Tanglaw sa Kinabukasan, represented by Remegio De la Cruz; Sama-samang Kapitbahayan, represented by Teresita Mamaril; Laban ng Abang Tagariles ng Guiguinto, represented by Lizamar Estimar; Federation of Informal Settlers in Malabon, represented by Clarita Eneria; Neighborhood Association for Integrity, represented by Edwin Lacsina.

Individuals: Dr. Melba Padilla Maggay, Ph.D., writer, social anthropologist and president-chief executive officer of the Institute for Studies in Asian Church and Culture; Nicanor Perlas, environmentalist; Fr. Robert Reyes; Dr. Jonathan V. Exiomo, ThD., president of the Alliance Graduate School; Prof. Averell U. Aragon, professor of theology and church history; Rev. Winston Pinzon, resident minister of the Christ Our Life Fellowship of the Christian and Missionary Churches of the Philippines and trainer for Mission Ministries Philippines;

Prof. Mary Janette L. Pinzon of the Department of Speech Communication and Theater Arts, University of the Philippines-Diliman, for their own behalf and that of their children—Asher Micah L. Pinzon, 13, Ariel Lev, 11, and Anya Dara, 9; Mifflin Ann A. Garcia, staff member of the Isacc, for her own behalf and that of her children—Leesha, 13, and Ethan Luke, 6;

Raquel Arpojia, staff member of the Isacc, for her own behalf and that of her child Luke, 16; and Dr. Ma. Dominga Padilla, M.D.

IN THE KNOW

Impeaching a President

IMPEACHMENT is the process prescribed in the 1987 Constitution for the removal from office of the President, Vice President, and members of the Supreme Court, Office of the Ombudsman and constitutional commissions.

As stipulated in Accountability of Public Officers (Article X1, Section 2), these public officers may be impeached for any of these offenses: culpable violation of the Constitution, treason, bribery, graft and corruption, betrayal of public trust, and other high crimes.

The House of Representatives has the exclusive power to initiate impeachment through a verified complaint filed by any of its members or by any citizen upon the endorsement of at least one-third of all the members of the chamber.

The Senate has the sole power to try and decide any case of impeachment.

On Nov. 13, 2000, Joseph Estrada became the first Philippine President to be impeached. But the impeachment trial was aborted with the walkout of the prosecutors and some of the senator-judges.

Steps

These are the steps in the process of impeaching a President:

1. The verified complaint is filed.
2. The committee on justice checks for probable cause. It determines whether the complaint is sufficient in form and substance. After a hearing, and by a majority vote of all its members, it recommends the filing of a verified resolution of impeachment.
3. The House votes on the resolution.
4. The complaint is endorsed to the Senate.

The verified complaint/resolution constitutes the articles of impeachment, and is endorsed to the Senate in the same manner as an approved bill of the House.

5. The Senate decides on the case.

Presided over by the Chief Justice, the Senate sits as a court to hear charges, with the House acting as the prosecutor through a committee of 11 members elected by a majority vote.

A two-thirds vote of the senators is needed to convict.

6. If the verdict is conviction, the President is removed from office and the Vice President is sworn in.

PDI Research

Only 42 file impeach case, others under wraps

From page A1

ting President of the country in five years to face a major impeachment case. Her predecessor, Joseph Estrada, was driven out of office by a popular uprising after he was impeached by the House.

But when Ms Arroyo entered the legislature hours later to deliver her State of the Nation Address, she hardly looked a leader fighting for survival. Loyal legislators gave her a standing ovation several times. *(Story on Page A1.)*

Wasting no time, Speaker Jose de Venecia immediately transmitted to the House committee on justice the Lozano original, the amended complaint, and a similar case filed by lawyer Roy Lopez, soon after the 13th Congress opened its second regular session.

"I know none of us looks forward to this process—because it is to destabilize the economy and at a time investors need political stability most of all," said De Venecia.

Confronting the charges

"But I also feel that we need to put this issue behind us—and that the President's best recourse is to confront the [charges] against her in the manner the Constitution prescribes," he stressed.

De Venecia, in effect, short-cut procedures by referring the complaints directly to the justice committee, bypassing the committee on rules.

The justice committee has 60 days to decide if the complaints were backed by enough evidence to warrant a trial in the Senate. It has about 50 members, predominantly members of Ms Arroyo's coalition.

De Venecia said that he had directed Secretary General Roberto Nazareno as early as 8 a.m. to put in the House Order of Business the impeachment complaints.

"I'm exercising my constitutional duty to place them in the Order of Business now, even if the same Constitution allows me the luxury of 10 session days within which to exercise such transmittal," said De Venecia.

Maturity as a nation

His action stunned even members of the majority who had proposed that the complaints should be referred first to the committee on rules, however long the process would take.

Members of Ms Arroyo's own party Kabalikat ng Malayang Pilipino welcomed the minority's move.

"Now is the time we are showing our maturity as a nation based on the rule of law," said Rep. Rodolfo Antonino.

"I will not tolerate any shortcut to the process. That's how justice moves," said administration Rep. Salacnib Baterina.

On paper, the 55-page amended complaint, filed at 9:30 a.m. with the House Secretary General, looked a far stronger case than that initially lodged on June 27 by lawyer Oliver Lozano.

The amended charge sheet accused Ms Arroyo of "undermining the integrity of her office and bringing disrepute on the presidency."

In legalese, it charged Ms Arroyo with culpable violations of the Constitution, bribery and graft and corruption, and betrayal of public trust.

The election cheating accusations against Ms Arroyo hinged partly on the so-called "Hello Garci" tapes about her supposed conversation with former Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano dealing with rigging the vote.

"This proceeding for impeachment, as a constitutional exercise, is a way of honoring the Office of the President and restoring its tarnished reputation," it said, adding its aim was to "expose the criminality ... of the conduct in the Office of the Chief Executive."

Three copies of both the resolution of endorsement and the amended complaint were lodged with Ramon Mata, a member of the House Secretary General's secretariat, by House Minority Leader Francis Escudero and Representatives Ronaldo Zamora, Rolex Suplico, Jacinto Paras and Alan Peter Cayetano.

Congress' second biggest bloc, the Nationalist People's Coalition, has yet to make up its mind.

NPC riddle

Rep. Gilbert Teodoro, nephew of the party's chair emeritus Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco, said the NPC wing identified with his uncle—with 25 congressmen—would want to see the evidence before making a stand.

At least 10 NPC members led by Escudero were among those who endorsed the complaint.

"The case should go through the process. The President has her rights, and Congress should give her a fair impeachment process," said Teodoro. But he added his party was not "keeping its doors closed."

Cover-up signs seen in Aussie-Pinoy deportation

SYDNEY—Immigration officials may have tried to cover up their wrongful deportation of an Australian woman who spent four years in a hospice for the dying in Olongapo City, a report said Monday.

A month after Vivian Alvarez Solon, now 42, was deported to the Philippines in 2001, an official wiped out the debt she owed the department — something only the minister of finance had the power to do, the Sydney Morning Herald said.

The department usually charges failed immigrants and those who overstay their visas for costs, including their air tickets home.

The fact that the debt was erased in Alvarez Solon's case raised questions about whether someone realized deportation was a mistake and got rid of the debt to avoid embarrassment, the paper said.

Evidence of the erasure was detailed in a report by former police chief Mick Palmer, who conducted an inquiry into scandals over the deportation of Alvarez Solon and the wrongful detention of a German-born resident, Cornelia Rau.

Palmer found that officials realized the deportation was a mistake by 2003 at the latest but did not initiate a search for Alvarez Solon, who was only discovered in Olongapo City in May after media coverage of her case.

Prime Minister John Howard this month apologized to the two women, whose cases are among a series of alleged blunders and injustices committed by the immigration department. *AFP*

Herminia Aquino; 89

HERMINIA "Minnie" Luna Aquino of Teachers' Village, Quezon City, and Calapan, Oriental Mindoro, died on Friday, July, 22, 2005, of lingering illness. She was 89.

She is the wife of the late Wenceslao F. Aquino. She is survived by her children Winnie and Stella Garces; Rolando and Rica Borres (deceased); Nellie and Ferdinand Ong; and 10 grandchildren.

Her remains lie in state at Chapel C, Christ the King Church, Greenmeadows Subdivision in Quezon City.

She will be buried today, Tuesday, at the Himlayang Pilipino, Tandang Sora, Quezon City, after an 8:30 a.m. Mass.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Tuesday, July 26, 2005
Joachim and Ann

1st Reading: Sir 44:1, 10-15
Gospel: Matthew 13:16-17

Jesus said to his disciples, "But blessed are your eyes because they see, and your ears, because they hear.

For I tell you that many prophets and upright people would have longed to see the things you see, but they did not, and to hear the things you hear, but they did not hear it."

Commentary

This is one of Matthew's other beatitudes: Blessed are you who see and you who hear what the prophets and the just ones longed for over the long generations of living on promises! And we find ourselves in that group of the blessed because we too have seen the works of God in Jesus, in the Eucharist, in the community, in the sacraments and the poor and we hear in our communities at liturgy and in base communities the Word of God among us. Do we long for these scriptures and stories, prayers and exhortations of how to live together, how to pray, how to forgive, how to live meekly (nonviolently) in a world of injustice and violence? Maybe we need to pray for the prophets' passion for God's will to be done on earth and God's word to be respected and integrated into our communities' lives and to pray for the just ones' dedication to obeying the Word in our own lives.

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WWWExpress

GMA high on Charter change

From page A1

There was no reference to the burning issues rocking her administration, including accusations that she had stolen the 2004 presidential election and that her husband, son and brother-in-law had accepted payoffs from the "jueteng" racket.

She referred to the current political turmoil only when she reiterated her observation of how the nation had been split into two: "Ours is a country divided; the story of our nation is a tale of two Philippines; almost, as it were, two countries under the same name."

The "two countries" are one whose economy is "now poised for takeoff," and one "whose political system, after equally long years of degeneration, has become a hindrance to progress," according to Ms Arroyo.

Ramos said he was satisfied with Ms Arroyo's report, although he acknowledged that her critics might not be.

He said only a shift to the parliamentary form of government would solve the administration's woes, as well as the shaky economic situation.

But Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. was unimpressed.

"She's a living lie. A lie needs another lie to sustain it. That's what her Sona amounted to: A pack of lies/half-truths to buy her time," Pimentel said. *(See related story in Across the Nation, Page A19.)*

Achievements

The President said her administration was able to cover 68 million people, including 30 million indigents, with health care insurance and to curb the problems involving illegal drugs, kidnapping for ransom, and even the insurgency.

She cited the enactment of three laws comprising the "biggest fiscal package in our history, the biggest revenue increase in a generation that will break the vicious cycle of financing development by borrowing and having to borrow again just to service those loans."

She said that under her watch, the country was able to make strides in the international scene, including winning a seat in the United Nations Security Council that presided over the landmark resolution calling for democracy in Iraq.

"We head the Apec antiterrorism task force," Ms Arroyo said, pointing out that US President George Bush had acknowledged the Philippines' victories in the war on terror.

And because the Philippines had worked closely with the Organization of the Islamic Conference in forging peace in Mindanao, she said, 80 percent of the peace talks between the government and the secessionist Moro Islamic Liberation Front had been completed.

"Permanent peace in Mindanao is within reach," she said.

With all these achievements, the country is "on the verge of takeoff," the President said.

That is, she said, "if only we would overcome the tendency to be our own worst enemy."

Sending messages

"Thus, with investors both here and abroad in mind, I invite you all to join me in sending them a strong message from this great hall: We will not waver in our commitment to economic reform and fiscal discipline, whatever the political cost," she said, adding:

"The other message to send is that we will address the burden that the other Philippine story imposes on our anticipated takeoff. I refer to the story of how our political system has now become a hindrance to our national progress."

Ms Arroyo said the political system had "degenerated to an extent that it is difficult for anyone to make any headway yet keep his hands clean."

She said the system was still capable of achieving great reforms, but by and large, "our political system has betrayed its promise to each new generation of Filipinos, not a few of whom are voting with their feet, going abroad, and leaving that system behind."

The President said politicians might have "strained the present political system to its final limit."

"It is time to turn to the people, bring them into government—and change the way the government is done," she said.

Fundamental change

Ms Arroyo received prolonged applause when she said the people wanted a government that "works for them at every level" and that "begins at their doorstep in the barangay, and does not end before the closed door of a bureaucrat in Metro Manila."

"The system clearly needs fundamental change, and the sooner, the better," she said.

The President said it was up to Congress to determine the mode to amend the Constitution, but she added that a constituent assembly convened by Congress "may well give our people the quickest reforms."

She said the questions that had to be answered in changing the Charter included "how much more government is needed for the greater safety and economic security of our people, and how much less government is more conducive to free enterprise and economic progress."

"I shall work with Congress, civil society groups and local government executives who are convinced that Charter changes are needed to enable the country to surmount the unprecedented challenges of the 21st century," she pledged.

Focus on LGUs

The President thanked the heads of local government units for bringing about an "LGU power revolution through transformative leadership."

She said their achievements in bringing economic and social stability to their provinces "make a compelling case for federalism."

"Perhaps it's time to take the power from the center to the countryside that feeds it," she said.

Ms Arroyo said it would be the body to be created that would determine the form of government.

"Legislation could be quickened and laws made more responsive to the people under a parliamentary system, similar to that of our progressive neighbors in the region," she said.

But as Congress works out changes in the Charter, Congress should also help her in other initiatives "to the lasting benefit of our people," the President said.

She said among these was the passage of:

- A Pre-Need code to rehabilitate and regulate the pre-need educational programs.
- Legislation encouraging renewable and indigenous energy in the wake of the global oil crisis.
- An antiterrorism law that would "protect rather than subvert, enhance rather than weaken, the rights and liberties that terrorism precisely threatens with extinction."

Appeal for unity

In concluding her report, Ms Arroyo appealed for unity and for the people's help.

"Now is not the time for divisiveness, and while there's no avoiding partisan politics, there can be a determined effort by all sides to limit the collateral damage on a country poised for takeoff," she said.

The President acknowledged that people wanted change.

"We may disagree among ourselves but let us never lose sight of that greater battle for one people, one country, one Philippines. Not the country of this or that President but the Philippines of our shared and passionate affections," she said.

They 'saved' her

House Minority Leader Francis Escudero said it was "saddening" that the President's Sona was "too short."

"It did not address the basic issues confronting our country involving cheating, lying and stealing, by some people in the government and by a privileged few," Escudero said.

"She also expectedly echoed the line of JDV (De Venecia) and FVR (Ramos) on Charter change by way of paying off her political debt for their having 'saved' her," he said, adding:

"On the whole, as expected, she was less than honest, forthright and candid with respect to the true [state of the nation]."

Sen. Sergio Osmeña III said: "She's actually saying the political system is the problem. Not Gloria, not Garci (ex-Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano). She should be ashamed … Before we jump into that proposal (Charter change), we must first establish if the people want it, and if it's not just the politicians who want it."

De Venecia used hyperbole to describe what the President had just announced: "It's dramatic and historic. Imagine shifting the Philippines' presidential bicameral government to a unicameral parliamentary federal system under a constituent assembly?"

He said Ms Arroyo's report showed that the winds of change had finally arrived.

"President Arroyo has become stronger, as well as the historic parliamentary movement," he said.

But Vice President Noli de Castro said the administration should "first educate our people about the merits" of amending the Constitution.

He pointed out that the issue of Charter change had divided the people in the past, simply because the issues involved had not been properly ventilated.

But he said he was for a change through a constitutional convention, whose members are elected by the people.

He said he was one of the 16 senators who had voted for a measure supporting a shift to the parliamentary system through this mode.

De Castro expressed satisfaction with the President's expressed plans and commitment to improve her governance and raise the quality of life of the people, especially the poor. He cited the areas of microfinance and housing, in which, he said, he had been at the forefront.

Opposition from allies

The President's push for Charter change to pave the way for a federal-parliamentary system of government met with strong opposition from some lawmakers, including her allies in the Senate.

Sen. Pia Cayetano said: "Yes, I agree that the political system can stand some change. But we have fundamental problems. In the last three months, many issues were raised and I don't think the political system had anything to do with the crisis that we now face.

"I'm a bit disappointed that that seems to be the escape or *panakip-butas*. I don't think that should be the emphasis."

Sen. Miriam Defensor Santiago said: "I think it will exacerbate conflict within society if we take up Charter change at this time when there is a question of the authentication of the election results …

"But I'm willing to concede that if the President and I have different views, it could be that her view would be the wiser view simply because she has more data available to her … "

Closure first

Three senators maintained that the administration should first bring closure to the political crisis before tackling Charter change.

Sen. Rodolfo Biazon said: "The first thing to do is resolve the political controversy, and when things are normal, then and only then should we think about changing the Constitution."

A MOMENT of triumph gained. President Arroyo waves goodbye before boarding the presidential chopper back to the Palace. LYN RILLON

Sen. Richard Gordon said: "Before you go on Charter change, we have to finish the process (impeachment). But once we finish the process, people must sign on to it. Whether it's guilty [or] not guilty, we stop it."

Sen. Manuel Roxas II said: "Changing the Constitution at this time may be a distraction. The President may be ill-advised to put this as a priority. There are many problems that we need to confront, particularly the gap in education, the gap in infrastructure, the competitiveness of our nation.

"Let's keep our focus on what is truly important, which is reviving our economy and making sure that investments, jobs and incomes do come here."

From the Church

Archbishop Fernando Capalla, president of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines, welcomed Ms Arroyo's effort to initiate healing and unity.

"I am glad that the President's Sona referred to healing and unity, and [that she] remembered to pray to the Lord," Capalla, a known Arroyo ally, said in a statement.

"I promise to pray for her, and urge everybody to do the same," he said.

But from his small tent on Edsa where he is on a hunger strike, activist-priest Robert Reyes described Ms Arroyo's Sona as "contrived" and "completely irrelevant" to the clamor for genuine change.

"But it was completely relevant to the ambitions of the people in Congress," Reyes pointed out. "I hope this will wake up the bishops. GMA's message is Charter change through a constituent assembly. [She] means to distract us from the impeachment, from the truth."

Overwhelming

Other lawmakers were quick to air their comments:

"She told this chamber what it wanted to hear," said Rep. Cavite Gilbert Remulla, noting that House members "overwhelmingly" gave the President a standing ovation when she called for a constituent assembly.

"But that's basically it. She evaded a lot of things such as the pervading questions up in the air right now [on] impeachment charges and electoral (fraud). It's a way to get [around it] by not talking about it," he said.

Ilocos Sur Rep. Salacnib Baterina said Charter change was "the main avenue to survival."

Albay Rep Joel Salceda said the President's report was "unusually short, she just went ahead with constitutional change and discarded details of economic and fiscal reform, with a blanket restatement of her commitment to these goals."

He said this was because, among other reasons, Ms Arroyo "felt pragmatically that there was little she could say that would change the minds of her opponents and a cynical public."

Bayan Muna Rep. Teodoro Casiño wanted to know: "Was that [the President] or FVR talking? Her Sona has been hijacked by the FVR-JDV tag team. There was not even a mention of the most important issue for the public, which is her resignation due to her 'lapses in judgment.'"

"She has lost not only her credibility and integrity but also her own thoughts. And imagine, she's spending billions for Cha-cha just to save her skin." *With reports from TJ Burgonio, Cynthia D. Balana, Michael Lim Ubac, Christian V. Esguerra, Luige A. del Puerto, Philip C. Tubeza and PDI Research*

GMA brings House down: 5 ovations, 33 rounds of applause

From page A1

23-minute speech, apart from the standing ovation and chants of "GMA, GMA" from the obviously partisan crowd upon her arrival at and departure from the session hall of the House of Representatives.

After the introduction of Speaker Jose de Venecia, the President, elegant in a blue Filipiniana-style gown, paused for one minute to bask in the applause, waving and mouthing "Thank you" to the audience.

After her speech, she waited for two minutes for the applause to die down before descending to the Session Hall to again press flesh.

The smile she flashed was radiant, but there was no fire in her voice when she asked the people to help her for the nation's sake.

The longest applause, punctuated by a standing ovation led by De Venecia and the majority of the congressmen, erupted when Ms Arroyo said it was time for debates on Charter change and a shift to the parliamentary form of government.

Bishop Cesar Punzalan of the Philippine Council of Evangelical Churches, said there was no doubt the audience was supportive of Ms Arroyo.

"As you can see, the President was warmly received. It's like someone who has come home," Punzalan said.

"She's wholeheartedly and warmly welcomed by the people. She's a good President, and I am here to support her," said Mayor Jack Maruhom of Kauswagan, Lanao del Norte.

Administration Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago said she could not recall any other Sona that was interrupted by as many rounds of applause.

Subliminal message

"I think the presence of the governors and mayors was to remind the opposition in Metro Manila that they have no support in the outlying cities and provinces. That is the subliminal message," Santiago said, adding:

"And … if the pro-Gloria crowd inside the session hall was so carefully managed, another subliminal message is that the President is a very good manager."

The audience clapped and laughed when Senate President Franklin Drilon welcomed Ms Arroyo with a handshake three times—at the rear entrance after she disembarked from the presidential chopper, at the rostrum when she joined him and the Speaker to open the joint session, and after her speech.

But as though to reflect his and the Liberal Party's decision to call for the President's resignation, he never clapped—not even when De Venecia introduced Ms Arroyo or at times rose to take part in the standing ovations. *(See story on Page A1.)*

Body language

Ms Arroyo returned the frosty body language, acknowledging Drilon only after she did the Speaker, Vice President Noli de Castro and former President Fidel Ramos.

She patted De Venecia when she arrived and appeared to only oblige Drilon's handshake. She also made special mention of De Venecia's initiatives on the economic front.

The audience that packed the 1,624-capacity House gallery, made up mostly of local executives and guests invited by Malacañang, the House and the Senate, drowned out the disapproval of the opposition and jumped at every chance to clap and express their support for Ms Arroyo, occasionally drawing glances from lawmakers.

The local executives applauded wildly when the President said she would not waver in her economic reforms whatever the political cost. They also cheered when she mentioned the need to change the political system for a federal government, giving more powers to local executives, and dispersing development from Metro Manila to the countryside.

The longest applause—coupled by a standing ovation—was when Ms Arroyo said it was "time to start the great debate on Charter change," and that she favored a constituent assembly.

The President was also loudly applauded when she cited her economic and political achievements in the last four years, when she said the country could advance if Filipinos stopped being their own worst enemies, and when she called for "one people, one country, one Philippines."

Cast of thousands

The House, which hosted the event, invited some 3,000 VIPs and special guests.

They were sent formal invitations, including car passes and color-coded passes that enabled access to seats in the three-level North and South galleries. They were also provided refreshments.

In the audience were some 70 foreign ambassadors and officials of international agencies, more than 60 justices, military and police officers, 50 governors, a big number of mayors and other local officials, about 30 Cabinet members, and hundreds of lawmakers' spouses.

The VIPs included De Castro, Ramos, Papal Nuncio Archbishop Antonio Franco and 59 other ambassadors and chargé d'affaires, Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. and other justices of the Supreme Court and Court of Appeals.

The President's only daughter Luli and younger son Dato with his wife Cacai sat at the South Gallery.

The Cabinet members in attendance were Eduardo Ermita (executive secretary), Angelo Reyes (interior secretary), Avelino Cruz (defense), Romulo Neri (budget), Peter Favila (trade), Patricia Sto. Tomas (labor), Michael Defensor (environment), Margarito Teves (finance), Leandro Mendoza (transportation), Ace Durano (tourism), Raul Gonzalez (justice), Merceditas Gutierrez (chief presidential legal counsel), Rigoberto Tiglao (chief, Presidential Management Staff), Rene Velasco (Public Information Agency), Ed Pamintuan (external affairs) and Roberto Pagdanganan.

No-shows

Former President Corazon Aquino, who had earlier called for Ms Arroyo's resignation, was invited but was not present.

Her only son, Tarlac Rep. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino Jr., who attended the session, said she was watching the proceedings at home.

But Lourdes Siytangco, Aquino's spokesperson, downplayed the latter's absence.

Siytangco told the INQUIRER that the former President did not attend the Sona even during Ramos' time.

"It's nothing at all," she said of Aquino's absence. "She's still praying for the country."

Former first lady Imelda Marcos, who is supportive of Ms Arroyo, did not show up. Her daughter, Ilocos Norte Rep. Imee Marcos, joined the opposition's boycott of the Sona.

There was no walkout from the Session Hall but only nine of the 28 minority representatives showed up on the floor.

The nine-member Senate minority snubbed the session—the first time in history that such a thing had happened, according to Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr.

He said he and his colleagues saw no reason to be at the House for the Sona because they no longer believed in the President's credibility.

All but one—Joker Arroyo—of the 14 administration senators attended.

Roses vs 'calamansi'

Before the lawmakers arrived in force, the session hall became a battle between pots of *calamansi* seedlings and peach roses.

The House minority tried to convey defiance by placing small vases of peach roses on the tables of those who boycotted the event.

Representative Marcos said she put the roses on the tables of the boycotting congressmen because they suspected that the Speaker would have the seats occupied to cover their absence.

The peach roses were meant to signify the opposition lawmakers' support for the "im-peach-ment" complaint against the President.

Not to be outdone, Compostela Valley Rep. Manuel "Waykurat (No Fear)" Zamora immediately had 100 *calamansi* seedlings brought in from his nearby nursery. He personally carried the seedlings to the tables of the administration congressmen.

"If they have flowers for the opposition, I have *calamansi* for the administration. [The opposition] will have hoarse throats for shouting 'Hello Garci,' so *calamansi* juice is the cure," he quipped.

Consultation

According to a source in Malacañang, Ms Arroyo consulted her Cabinet about her speech last Friday.

She reportedly holed up in the Palace on Saturday and Sunday.

The source said Ms Arroyo was told to make the Cabinet members stand up and cheer, and to do it from the heart. This was reportedly what prompted her to cut down on statistics and to employ rhetorical flourish.

But the source expressed surprise that Ms Arroyo devoted the bulk of her speech to amending the Constitution. He said it was probably because De Venecia and Ramos—the main proponents of Charter change—were present. *With reports from Cynthia D. Balana and Gil Cabacungan Jr.*

Health experts still bracing for deadlier bird flu strain

By Christian V. Esguerra

MEDICAL experts are bracing for a new and deadlier virus mutating from bird flu and the common human influenza, according to a top official of the Department of Health.

The new strain might have the capacity to move from one human to another, breaking the current limitation of the avian influenza which is transmitted to humans only through fowls, according to Dr. Enrique Tayag, officer in charge of the National Epidemiology Center.

"We are guarding against the possibility that this might become a pandemic," he told the INQUIRER in an interview.

Pandemic happens when a country in each of the continents is afflicted with a particular disease, he explained.

Tayag said the World Health Organization had also sounded off a similar concern about the possibility of a new flu strain three years ago.

The fear might become a reality in the event that a human sick with influenza is infected by the much deadlier bird flu, he said.

"The person can become a mixing vessel for the re-assortment of the virus," he explained.

So far, the country has been successful against bird flu, effectively safeguarding its multi-million-peso chicken export, mostly to Japan.

Earlier this month, the Bureau of Animal Industry found a low-pathogenic bird flu strain in blood samples taken from three ducks in a farm in Calumpit, Bulacan.

The government discovered the strain during a routine check of poultry products whose eggs (balut) were set for export.

A subsequent test at a laboratory in Australia confirmed that the strain was not the lethal "H5N1" strain that had killed at least 39 people in Vietnam.

A person can be infected upon contact with fowls and poultry products carrying the flu's deadly strain, and contaminated surfaces. Infected birds spread the virus through their saliva, nasal secretion and feces.

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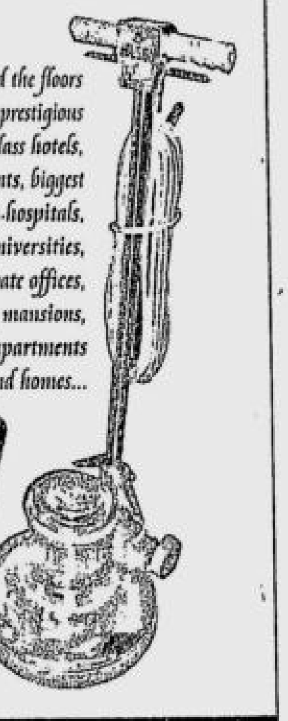
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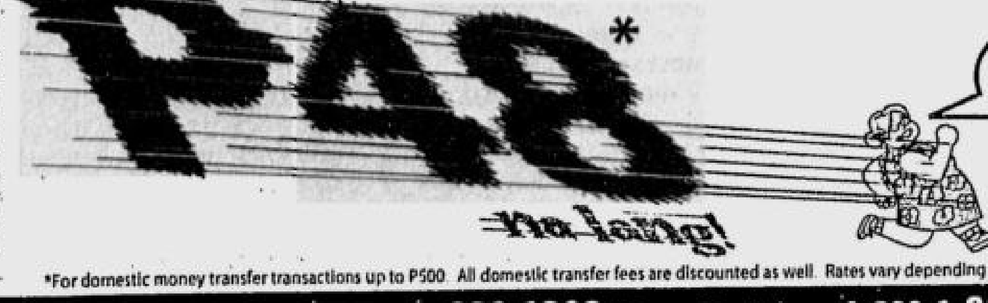

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The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Suicide car bombers kill 14 in Baghdad

BAGHDAD, Iraq—Suicide car bombers struck twice Monday in Baghdad, killing 14 other people and injuring nearly 30, hospital and government officials said.

The first blast occurred shortly after sunrise at a security checkpoint near the Sadeer Hotel in central Baghdad, officials said. The Iraqi defense ministry said 12 people, not including the bomber, were killed and 18 were injured, including security guards and civilians.

About three hours later, a second suicide bomber targeted a former Saddam Hussein palace being used by the Ministry of Interior police command. Two commandos were killed and 10 people were injured, police said.

Maj. Gen. Adnan Thabit told Al-Jazeera television that commandos opened fire on the vehicle detonating it about 50 meters from the palace.

On Sunday, a suicide truck bomber attacked a police station in eastern Baghdad, killing at least 22 others and devastating shops in the area.

The Sadeer Hotel attack shook the heart of the capital and sent a huge plume of black smoke rising over the 14th of Ramadan Mosque along the traffic circle where the statue of Saddam was hauled down by Iraqis and US Marines on April 9, 2003.

The injured include people in nearby shops and cafés which were damaged by the blast.

Alaa Issa, who works as a guard at the Sadeer, said from his hospital bed that "I don't remember anything but waking up in the hospital."

Mohammed Badr, who works at a nearby restaurant, said he first felt the concussion wave from the blast, "then I heard the explosion."

"Part of the ceiling fell on me," he said at the hospital.

In March, Abu Musab al-Zarqawi's al-Qaida in Iraq purportedly posted a video on a website showing the huge explosion at the Sadeer Hotel, killing four and wounding 40 others, including 30 American contractors.

Al-Zarqawi's group described the Sadeer as the "hotel of the Jew."

A US soldier was also killed Monday when a roadside bomb exploded under his vehicle near Samarra north of Baghdad, the US command said.

The victim, whose name was not released, was assigned to the US Army's Task Force Liberty that is responsible for security in a large area of the infamous Sunni Triangle, which is the main center of the insurgency.

As of Sunday, at least 1,777 members of the US military had died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count. At least 1,365 died as a result of hostile action. The figures include five military civilians.

The AP count is seven higher than the US Pentagon's tally as of the last update Friday. *AP*

Mystery illness kills 17 farmers in China

BEIJING—A mystery disease that killed 17 farmers who handled sick pigs or sheep in China's southwest is unrelated to bird flu or SARS and is probably caused by bacteria carried by pigs, state media reported Monday.

Another 41 people in the southwestern province of Sichuan were hospitalized with symptoms that include high fever, fatigue, nausea and vomiting, and "became comatose later with bruises under the skin," the official Xinhua News Agency said.

Twelve were in critical condition, Xinhua said.

The illness likely stems from streptococcus suis, a bacteria that is usually spread among pigs, provincial health official Zeng Huajin was quoted as saying by the China Daily newspaper.

"I can assure you that the disease is absolutely not SARS, anthrax or bird flu," Zeng said. He did not elaborate on how the illness was spread to humans, saying more research is needed to be done.

China is sensitive to such public health threats after criticism of its handling of severe acute respiratory syndrome, which first emerged in the country's south in 2002.

The government was widely criticized for its slow response to pleas for cooperation and information about the disease, which killed nearly 800 people worldwide before subsiding in July 2003.

China also is trying to contain an outbreak of avian flu in its west, where thousands of migratory birds have died in recent weeks.

A man who answered the phone at the Sichuan health bureau on Monday said 17 people had died from the mystery illness and another two have recovered. He refused to give his name.

The cause of the deaths was under investigation, he said.

The symptoms reported "seem consistent" with streptococcus suis, said Bob Dietz, a spokesperson for the World Health Organization's Western Pacific region in Manila. *AP*

A MAN walks through the debris in the old town of Sharm el-Sheik, Egypt, on Monday. AP

Egypt eyes 6 Pakistanis as attack probe widens

SHARM EL-SHEIK, Egypt—Police investigators said Monday that they were searching for six Pakistani men as the probe into the weekend's terrorist attack at this Red Sea resort widened.

Police are circulating photographs of the six who have apparently been missing since before the attacks at checkpoints in and around this southern Sinai resort city. An Associated Press correspondent who saw the images said the men appeared to be between the ages of 20 and 30.

The involvement of Pakistanis in the attack in Sharm el-Sheik would be unprecedented, as non-Egyptians have rarely been linked to attacks here. It would also be extremely difficult for a group of young Pakistanis not to be noticed in Sharm, one of the heaviest policed cities in Egypt and a favorite place of residence for President Hosni Mubarak.

An official at the Pakistan Embassy in Cairo said his embassy was in contact with Egyptian authorities over the issue of the missing Pakistanis.

"But they have not officially informed us that the Pakistanis are suspected of involvement in the bombing. They are only saying: 'We are searching for them. We cannot trace them,'" said Khalid Ahmed, a counselor at the Pakistani mission.

"It is very difficult for us to confirm whether any Pakistani was in Sharm el-Sheik but it is possible that someone may have been there. I have a strong belief that Pakistanis cannot be involved in terrorism here," he said.

Many Pakistanis use Egypt as a route to travel to Europe to find jobs, he said. Last week, police arrested between 40 and 45 Pakistanis in the Mediterranean city of Alexandria for being illegal immigrants.

Police have detained more than 70 people in Sharm and other parts of the Sinai Peninsula during the investigation, which is also following different threads, including possible Palestinian involvement and whether the attacks were linked to last October's bombings in two other Sinai resorts.

The investigators, who spoke only on condition of anonymity because of the sensitivity of the inquiry, said they were looking into whether the six men had any involvement in carrying out Saturday's attack, Egypt's deadliest ever.

Police are to conduct DNA testing on the remains of a suicide bomber found in a car that rammed into the Ghazala Gardens Hotel in Naama Bay, the city's main tourist area, early Saturday. Two other blasts rocked a car park near the hotel and an area about 3 km away called the Old Market.

According to local hospitals, Saturday's pre-dawn bombings killed at least 88 people; Egypt's health ministry put the death toll at 64. Hospitals said the ministry count did not include a number of sets of body parts. At least one American was killed.

If independently confirmed, any involvement of Pakistanis would suggest that those behind Saturday's bombings belong to a much wider terror network than previously thought.

Until the latest news broke Monday, suspicions had primarily focused on a Sinai-based network thought responsible for bombings in the area last October that also targeted tourist sites.

The involvement of the Pakistanis, if proven, would also increase suspicions that Osama bin Laden's al-Qaida may have been involved in the attacks. *AP*

Kin of slain Brazilian electrician slam cops

LONDON—The family of a Brazilian electrician who was mistaken for a terrorist and slain by British police threatened Monday to take legal action, but a senior officer insisted the new threat posed by suicide bombers made deadly force a necessary option.

Police shot Jean Charles de Menezes, 27, in a subway car after mistaking him for a suspect in the investigation into Thursday's botched bombing attempts on three subway trains and a bus. Officers later said he had no connection to the probe and expressed deep regret for his death.

"They have to pay for that in many ways, because if they do not, they are going to kill many people," his cousin Alex Pereira told British Broadcasting Corp. television.

"They killed my cousin; they could kill anyone," the 28-year-old London resident said.

But Chris Fox, president of the Association of Chief Police Officers, said police had to have the option of using lethal force to stop suspected suicide bombers.

"We have a series of tactics which range from disruption to the very, very final moment when you have to shoot, and the aim is to prevent the criminal or suspect causing harm to other people," Fox told BBC TV.

Menezes was followed by plainclothesmen after he left an apartment bloc that was under surveillance. Wearing a padded jacket, he boarded a bus and traveled to the nearby Stockwell subway station. According to officials, his clothing and behavior aroused the suspicions of the police, who ordered him to stop.

Witnesses said Menezes ran into a subway car, where officers shot him. It was unclear why Menezes, who spoke English, did not stop.

Police on Sunday arrested a third suspected terrorist after Thursday's failed attack against London's transit system. The arrest came in the same south London neighborhood where Menezes lived. *AP*

A BULGARIAN archeologist shows a finely crafted silver rhython, a drinking vessel, discovered late Saturday. AP

Ancient Thracian treasure unearthed in Bulgaria

SOFIA, Bulgaria—Archaeologists have unearthed a 2,400-year-old golden treasure in an ancient Thracian tomb in eastern Bulgaria, the director of the country's History Museum said Monday.

The gold-rich burial was discovered late on Saturday by a team of archaeologists, working on excavations near the village of Zlatinitsa, some 290 km east of the capital, Sofia.

The most impressive finds included a golden ring and wreath, finely crafted silver rhytons, or horn-shaped drinking vessels, and many golden and silver pieces of armor and horse trappings, Prof. Bozhidar Dimitrov told the Associated Press in a telephone interview.

"This was an extremely rich funeral, suggesting that the buried man could have been a Thracian king," Dimitrov said. "Although he was not buried according to Thracian traditions, all objects of art bear Thracian imagery."

The king's body was laid in a huge wood-paneled pit together with two horses and a dog, while Thracian kings were usually buried in vast stone tombs under huge earth mounds.

The Thracians lived in what is now Bulgaria and parts of modern Greece, Romania, Macedonia and Turkey from 4,000 B.C. to the 8th century A.D., when they were assimilated by the invading Slavs.

"Greek pottery that was also found in the tomb helped us safely date the whole burial to 360-370 B.C.," Dimitrov said.

According to a hypothesis, the newly discovered tomb could have been that of the Thracian governor Seutus, who declared himself king and used Greek mercenaries to oppress local Thracian tribes. His governance was described by the ancient Greek chronicler Xenophontes, Dimitrov said.

"Excavations continue, and new finds literally pop out every 10 minutes," Dimitrov said.

Thousands of Thracian mounds are spread throughout Bulgaria, and archaeological finds suggest that the Thracians established a powerful kingdom in the 5th century B.C. *AP*

Problem sensor won't stop launch of Discovery

CAPE CANAVERAL, Florida—Nasa will allow the shuttle Discovery to lift off Tuesday, despite not fully understanding its recent fuel tank failure and as long as the problem resurfaces in the same way it did earlier this month.

Nasa workers have switched the wiring between the problem sensor and another. one after the gauge failure forced the space agency to postpone the space shuttle's launch while astronauts were boarding Discovery on July 13.

Nasa's own launch rule—in place since the 1986 Challenger disaster—requires that all four hydrogen fuel gauges in the external tank be working properly. But Nasa will go ahead with the rescheduled launch at 10:39 a.m. (1439GMT) Tuesday if the problem doesn't recur or if it only is found in the two sensors that have been rewired, Wayne Hale, deputy manager of the shuttle program, said at a news conference late Sunday.

"If the problem recurs ... we're going to do some more tests just to make sure we understand what is causing this to happen. And if we're comfortable that we have a good understanding, then we can go fly," Hale said.

Nasa Administrator Michael Griffin said he was comfortable with the decision and even hoped the problem would recur to help further pinpoint the source of the trouble. He acknowledged the public might think that the space agency was rushing to launch, but insisted it was the right technical judgment.

Although the focus of Nasa's attention has been on the sensor, rain and clouds may end up causing more concern on launch day. *AP*

Asean divided over Burma issue at security meeting

VIENTIANE, Laos—Southeast Asian nations were split over whether military-ruled Burma (Myanmar) should forgo their bloc's chairmanship under US pressure, marring their annual security dialogue with Western and Asian partners, diplomats said Monday.

The conference through Friday among the 10-member Association of Southeast Asian Nations and 14 Asia-Pacific partners had antiterrorism efforts on the agenda. Australia was set to join a regional nonaggression pact to warm ties with neighbors that often have viewed it with mistrust.

The meeting received a blow on Monday when host Laos announced that Japanese Foreign Minister Nobutaka Machimura would not attend. No reason was given.

US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice had announced earlier that she would not attend. Asean diplomats read that as a snub over the group's failure to get Burma's junta to hand power to a civilian government and free pro-democracy leader Aung San Suu Kyi.

An Asean diplomat said the Burma issue split the group, with most members pushing for the junta to give up its turn while Cambodia and communist countries Laos and Vietnam urged it not to buckle under pressure. He spoke on condition of anonymity to avoid a diplomatic row.

Laos, Vietnam, Cambodia and Burma are Asean's poorest countries and traditionally support one another.

The United States and European Union have threatened to boycott Asean meetings if Burma takes up the chairmanship, and Southeast Asian nations fear that could endanger trade ties with the West.

The diplomat said Burmese Foreign Minister Nyan Win would indicate the junta's stand during an informal dinner with his Asean counterparts later Monday.

Asean's mixed signals to Burma have complicated efforts to get the country to reform, said UN envoy to Burma Razali Ismail, who was in Vientiane to meet with Nyan Win.

"It is not as if Asean countries have been collectively strong in putting out a clear signal to Myanmar," Razali told The Associated Press.

Countries like Malaysia, Indonesia and Singapore have been "quite forthright, but we have not heard from the others," Razali added.

Criticism from the West tends to have little effect on Burma's leaders, who decide matters "in their own time," he said. *AP*

Indon mob sets fire to gov't buildings

JAKARTA, Indonesia—Thousands of demonstrators set fire to government buildings on Sumatra Island on Monday while protesting a local election they claim was marred by irregularities and fraud, police and witnesses said.

More than 4,000 people took to the streets in Bintuhan, a town in Bengkulu province on the island's eastern coast, some carrying long knives, wooden clubs, and stones.

The mob went on a rampage after officials failed to meet with them to discuss allegations that last month's vote for the posts of district head and deputy were rigged.

Screaming "burn, burn," they poured gasoline on a parliamentarian's residence, an election commission office, and three other government buildings, then set them ablaze, witnesses said.

Maj. Sugeng Utomo said outnumbered police were unable to control the crowd.

"We tried to explain to them that government officials were not in their offices, but they just got angrier," he said.

Last month, Indonesians for the first time voted directly for a long list of local officials, including district heads, mayors and governors—a move praised as the country's final step in its march toward democracy.

But the results have in many cases been met by protests. Monday's has been the largest to date.

Many local officials heard of the planned demonstration and left Bintuhan. *AP*

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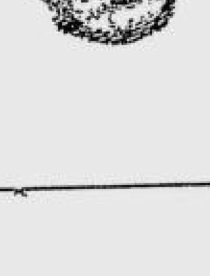

The most interesting people and personalities leave their mark in the pages of the Sunday Inquirer Magazine
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sunday INQUIRER magazine GET TO KNOW SOME REAL PEOPLE

Defensor's wife stands out

From page A1

them snubbed the President's Sona.

The svelte Defensor, who is a mother of four, came in a peach chiffon tube gown studded with Swarovski crystals.

Georgia Roa-Remulla glowed in casual elegance in black capri topped with a Maria Clara sleeved blouse in black and white.

Hand-me-down

Remulla, who is married to the rising star of the House, Cavite Rep. Gilbert Remulla, said the outfit was actually designed by Bubum Melgar for her mother, Ruby Diaz-Roa, eldest sister of former Miss Universe Gloria Diaz.

"It's a hand-me-down," Ms Remulla said.

The gown the President wore was also made for her mother, the late First Lady Eva Macapagal. It was turquoise blue with an innovative beaded *panuelo*.

Blue for GMA

"It's an old gown," said one of Ms Arroyo's image consultants.

Also in a Paul Cabral, Sen. Pia Cayetano stood out in a royal blue column gown with a ribboned sash accentuating the bodice and beads glittering from the sleeves. The flared skirt added bounce to the entire Thai silk ensemble.

Cayetano said she had the gown made for last year's State of the Nation Address. But for some reason, she wore another gown, also by Cabral.

"We were told to wear blue, if you support Gloria, and nothing, if you support Drilon (Senate President Franklin Drilon)," Pacita Gonzalez, the wife of Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez, said with a laugh.

"Oh that's just a text message," the matronly wife of the Cabinet member clarified.

According to Gonzalez, her sky blue chiffon gown with a pleated bodice was sewn by her long-time dressmaker Julie Regalado.

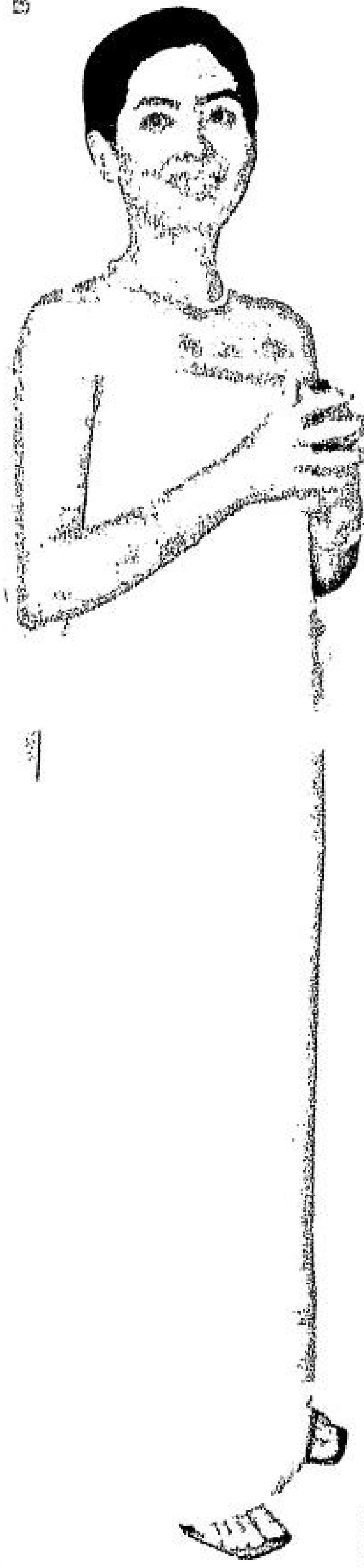
"But I designed it myself, and I also buy the fabric. It's cheaper that way," she said.

As in the past Sona this year's was not without its fashion victims.

Sen. Miriam Santiago had black shoes and brown bag, adding confusion to her embroidered formal dress in beige.

A bosomy congressman's wife donned a royal blue gown, and had a replica of the dress on her daughter. "What's that? Mini-me," a photographer exclaimed.

Marikina Mayor Marides Fernando was a portrait of subdued elegance in her fuchsia *terno* with floral handpainted designs. "It's by Cora Maningo," she beamed.



RYAN LIM

JULIE DEFENSOR, wife of DENR Secretary Mike Defensor, is a standout in peach though blue is the color of the day.

RYAN LIM

GEORGIA REMULLA, wife of the House rising star, with her mother Ruby Diaz-Roa, eldest sister of Gloria Diaz.

LYN RILLON

IMEE MARCOS: Not quite as regal as mom in a terno.

ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

PRESIDENTIAL ENTOURAGE of fashionistas behind GMA are Quezon City Rep. Nanette Castelo-Diaz, Lanao del Sur Rep. Faysah Dumarta, Leyte Rep. Trinidad Apostol. In the foreground is an unidentified member of the Palace protocol staff. Keeping in step with the ladies are Senators Bong Revilla and Richard Gordon.

LADIES OF THE UPPER CHAMBER. From left, Senators Loi Estrada, Pia Cayetano, Jamby Madrigal and Miriam Defensor-Santiago

JESS YUSON

STREET SMART. Representatives Mayong Aguja, Mujib Hataman, Etta Rosales and Rissa Hontiveros join the protest on Commonwealth Avenue calling for the President's impeachment.

JOAN BONDOC

VIPS AT THE GALLERY: From left, former Sen. Eva Estrada-Kalaw, former Sen. Magnolia Antonino, Lani Mercado-Revilla, wife of Sen. Bong Revilla, and Bing Pimentel, wife of Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr.

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AIG files first quarter report; posts first quarter 2005 net income of $3.68 billion

American International Group, Inc. (AIG) recently announced that it has filed its Quarterly Report on Form 10-Q for the period ending March 31, 2005 with the Securities and Exchange Commission. Additionally, AIG filed a Form 10-Q/A restating first quarter results for the years 2004 and 2003.

First quarter 2005 net income was $3.68 billion or $1.40 per share, compared to $2.56 billion or $0.97 per share in the first quarter of 2004. First quarter 2005 adjusted net income was $3.19 billion or $1.21 per share, compared to $2.66 billion or $1.01 per share in the first quarter of 2004. Shareholders' equity at March 31, 2005 was $82.68 billion compared to $80.61 billion at December 31, 2004. Consolidated assets increased to $828.26 billion compared to $798.66 billion at December 31, 2004.

Commenting on these results, AIG President and Chief Executive Officer Martin J. Sullivan said, "This was a good quarter for AIG, with all four of our business segments contributing to the growth in net income. These results are a testament to the strength and diversity of our global franchise.

"In our General Insurance operations, the combined ratio was an excellent 93.41. Net premiums written increased at a rate of 7.6 percent, reflecting our efforts to maintain pricing discipline and careful risk selection in a moderating rate environment. The Domestic Brokerage Group and Foreign General had strong growth in operating income and recorded combined ratios of 98.33 and 81.66, respectively. DBG's results included $118 million of additional losses incurred resulting from increased labor and material costs related to the 2004 Florida hurricanes. The outstanding cash flow from prior years generated excellent returns in net investment income. General insurance cash flow remained robust at $3.54 billion in the first quarter.

"Operating income from Life Insurance & Retirement Services rose 24.5 percent in the quarter, reflecting strong growth and profitability in our overseas operations. Japan and Southeast Asia had excellent results, with first year premiums growing 19.3 and 39.3 percent, respectively. Domestic Life Insurance results reflect the effectiveness of AIG American General's product and distribution strategies, as term life, universal life and structured settlement sales outpaced the industry.

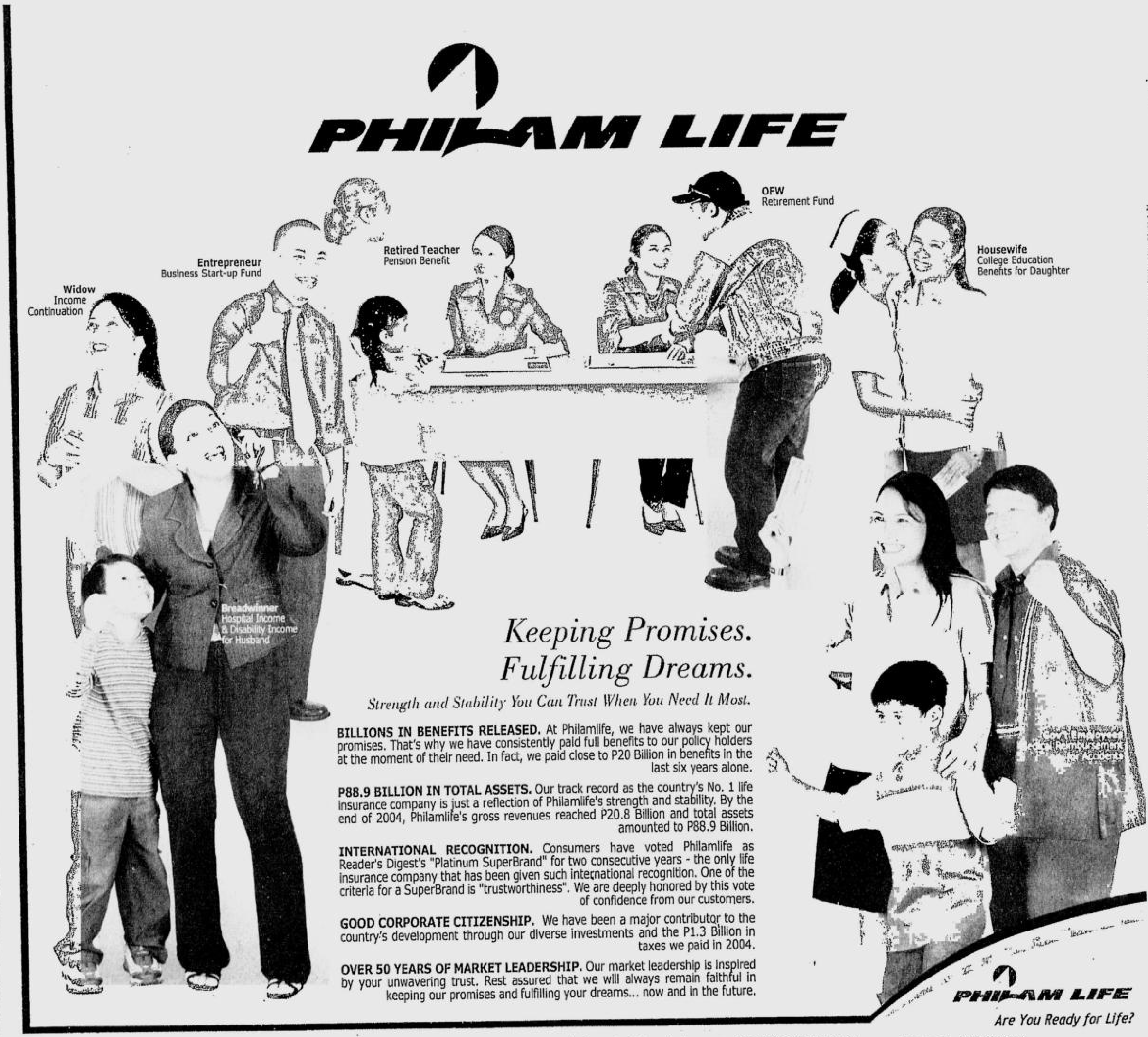
"In Financial Services, the improved global aviation market and firming lease rates resulted in a 19.4 percent increase in operating income, excluding the effect of FAS 133, at ILFC. Capital Markets operating income, excluding the effect of FAS 133, increased 15.4 percent with good results from commodity-index, foreign exchange and interest rate linked products. Consumer Finance had excellent results both domestically and internationally with operating income up 26.2 percent.

"Asset Management operating income, excluding the effect of FIN46R, increased by 29.2 percent in the first quarter as a result of its strong global product portfolio. Third party assets under management increased to over $55 billion from approximately $53 billion at year end 2004.

"Looking forward, although commercial property-casualty rates have softened both in the United States and internationally, terms and conditions have remained largely unchanged. We continue to see growth opportunities in General Insurance while maintaining underwriting discipline. Our global Life Insurance & Retirement Services business segment is positioned for growth in many of our markets, with an array of products distributed through multiple channels. In Financial Services, we expect that our growing Consumer Finance business in the U.S. and around the world will continue to perform well.

"Overall, our business will benefit from our continued strong focus on product innovation to meet customer needs, underwriting discipline, prudent expense management and the experience and dedication of our employees around the world," Mr. Sullivan added.

American International Group, Inc. (AIG), world leaders in insurance and financial services, is the leading international insurance organization with operations in more than 130 countries and jurisdictions. AIG companies serve commercial, institutional and individual customers through the most extensive worldwide property-casualty and life insurance networks of any insurer. In addition, AIG companies are leading providers of retirement services, financial services and asset management around the world. AIG's common stock is listed in the U.S. on the New York Stock Exchange and ArcaEx, as well as the stock exchanges in London, Paris, Switzerland and Tokyo.



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Opting for a trial

EDITORIAL

IF WE were President Macapagal-Arroyo and her political allies, we would agree to an impeachment trial and do everything to hasten the process. That is, if we have the truth and evidence on our side. If all the while we have not been telling the whole truth, then we would, for our own political survival, put up all sorts of obstacles to a speedy trial.

The President has admitted that she committed "a lapse in judgment" in talking to an unnamed official of the Commission on Elections. Is this tantamount to a culpable violation of the Constitution? Does this constitute betrayal of the public trust? Those who want the President impeached and booted out of office would have to prove that she committed a culpable violation of the Constitution, treason, bribery, graft and corruption, other high crimes or a betrayal of the public trust. If the President sincerely believes that her "lapse in judgment" amounts only to an impropriety, then she can look forward to an acquittal.

Ms Arroyo can be sure that she will be accorded justice, fairness and due process in an impeachment trial. Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr., who presided over the impeachment trial of former President Joseph Estrada, was the very soul of judicial wisdom, prudence and fairness during the entire proceedings. Everyone, including the lawyers and allies of Estrada, thought that he was very fair. The Chief Justice can be expected to act and decide on the issues fairly if ever the impeachment complaint against President Arroyo comes to trial.

But of course, in choosing to face an impeachment trial, the President will be facing some risks. One risk is the occurrence of an incident similar to the matter of "second envelope" in the impeachment trial of deposed President Estrada. We all know what happened then: The pro-Estrada senators used their numbers to vote down a motion to open the "second envelope" containing supposedly crucial evidence that would prove the guilt of the then President. One senator added insult to injury by dancing a victory jig on the floor of the Senate. The prosecutors-congressmen walked out of the hall, a senator cried, civil society was enraged, young people started a text brigade, and tens of thousands turned up on Edsa to demand the ouster of Estrada.

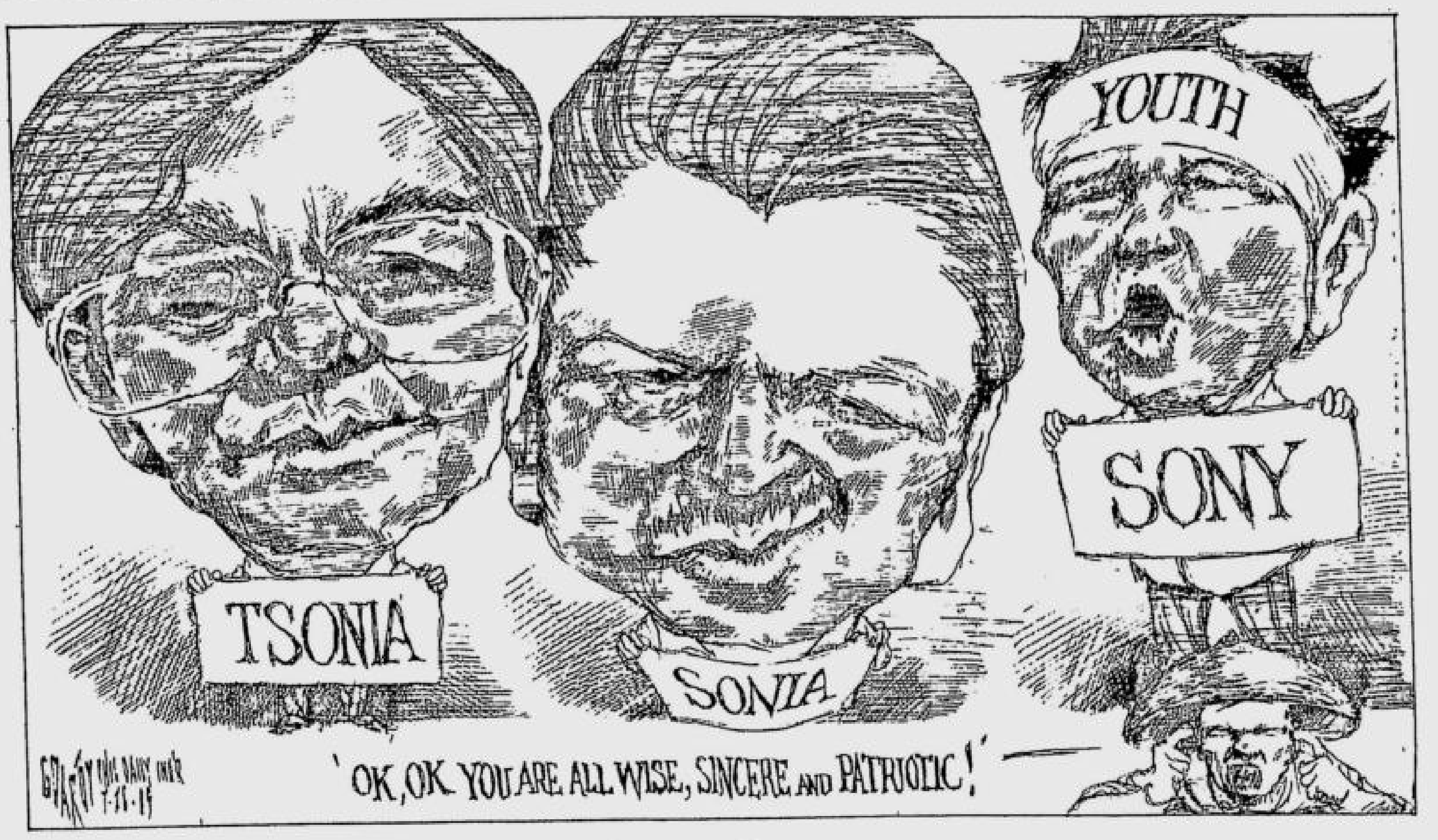
It was just a thin envelope that sparked a movement that led to Estrada's abandoning Malacañang (this was later construed as "constructive resignation") and the swearing in of Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo as his successor. Now, some small, innocuous thing, some unexpected incident may just spark a movement to oust President Arroyo in case something goes wrong in the projected impeachment trial.

But at this point there seems to be no credible alternative to resolving the issue of whether the President should go or remain in office. She has firmly said that she will not resign. She has said that a truth commission would be formed, but if she is going to appoint its members, it may not have 100-percent credibility. And what will be its functions and powers? If the commission finds her guilty of the charges against her, will it have the power to punish her?

The other alternative proposed by former President Fidel V. Ramos—to convene Congress into a constituent assembly—has run into opposition from various sectors, including the Senate. Some sectors instead favor the holding of a constitutional convention. It may take a long time to resolve this issue and in the meantime the nation will be drifting and going through a long period of suspense.

A trial is a time-tested process of ascertaining the truth. The law will be consulted and applied and the presentation of evidence will be governed by the Rules of Court. The testimony of witnesses will be challenged and tested in cross-examination. Due process will be served. Precedents have already been set in the impeachment trial of former President Estrada, and they will guide the present Senate sitting as the impeachment court. There is every reason to believe that the proceedings will turn out smoothly, unless…

If we were President Arroyo and her political allies, we would agree to an impeachment trial to put a closure to the nagging question about the truth about the "Garci tapes." The nation cannot be held forever in suspense while the economy suffers and political turmoil disrupts the people's daily lives.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'OK, OK YOU ARE ALL WISE, SINCERE AND PATRIOTIC!'

A surfeit of saviors?

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

WITH this turbulent State of the Nation Address behind us, one asks: What do we do with a surplus of "saviors"?

"President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's glittering political fairytale has unraveled," writes Sydney Morning Herald's Louise Williams. "With no obvious, competent successor, and an opposition united only in its own quest for power, there's plenty of messy political maneuvering."

Unsolicited "liberators," spawned by this mess, would lead us to a land of milk and honey. While the exodus is still massing, our "saviors" bicker over where they'd march us.

The opposition is saddling up for impeachment, after failing to stampede the President into resigning. Multiple charges will "rain on her parade," promises lead prosecutor Rep. Ronaldo Zamora.

Fine. That's a constitutional option. But an impeachment is more than legal savvy. Above all, it's about heart.

Zamora is no Joker Arroyo. The tough lead prosecutor who impeached Joseph Estrada, Arroyo also fought the Marcos dictatorship. In contrast, Zamora lodged comfortably with the Marcos and Estrada kleptocracies. He helped derail impeachment against former Election Commissioner Luzviminda Tancangco. We'll see how he performs.

The Philippines prides itself as "Southeast Asia's oldest and foremost democracy," notes Singapore Institute for International Affairs' Eric Teo Chu Cheow. "But its critical scourge are institutions, hobbled by vested interests, in a society that yearns for greater social justice."

The crucial test is not whether the President completes her political term, Teo says. It's how a democratic regime in the "least successful of East Asian countries" can survive and be sustained.

You wouldn't sense that in today's diminished Senate. There, Senators Franklin Drilon, Aquilino Pimentel and Panfilo Lacson wait impatiently for the President and Vice President to fall. They'd scavenge in the remains. Are these "saviors"? Or piranhas?

Ex-President Fidel Ramos proposes a Council of Leaders. It would convene a constituent assembly—not a convention of elected delegates—to draft a new Constitution, installing a parliamentary system. Prime Minister Fidel Ramos? Sounds impressive.

The Constitution needs 147 amendments, Ramos insisted in August 1997. Nobody recalls what the 146 were. But all agreed the 147th would extend terms of office.

A constituent assembly of self-seekers would be, as H.L. Mencken said, "a place where Jesus Christ and Judas Iscariot would be equals. But the betting odds would favor Judas."

Estrada's group and communist allies failed to uncork people power through rallies. They've alienated the critical middle forces. So, they're positioning to leap into the vacuum if and when Arroyo falls. Even now, their shell fronts proclaim that'd be a "mandate" to install themselves as a transitional government.

It's "ye olde power grab" deodorized by fancy names. Makati Mayor Jejomar and San Juan Mayor JV Ejercito say it's a "revolutionary council." The radical Left's Horacio Morales and Edicio de la Torre prefer "Unity for Truth and Justice Coalition." Their roadmap is simple: scrap the Constitution.

What about the 76 percent of the 81 percent of voters who ratified the Constitution? Irrelevant. The whatchamacallit will rule for "not more than 1,000 days." By what authority? No answer. What if it decides 2,000 days are needed? No reply.

Suppose it doesn't call for new elections? Next question. Would foreign countries recognize such a government? Irrelevant. How many members? No explanation. Will Joseph Estrada be made chair? No comment. They will nominate the council members. Who are "they"?

From The Hague, National Democratic Front's Luis Jalandoni answers: Party-list Representatives Satur Ocampo and Crispin Beltran "would qualify as council members." Really? Since when did Dutchmen prescribe qualifications for Philippine national office? Only the Constitution did that—until now.

Are other would-be saviors "qualified"? These include: Horacio Morales, who cofounded NDF, the Reds' political arm; Binay; retired Gen. Fortunato Abat; former Budget Secretary Salvador Enriquez Jr.; former AFP Chief of Staff Renato de Villa.

This is a "council of the unelected, composed of the one-sided and deciding for the unconsulted," an INQUIRER editorial notes. It'd replace an entire elected government for one "that does not even see the need to 'be voted on.'"

Confronted by a power grab, will the military stay neutral? columnist Antonio Abaya asks. The Constitution mandates the AFP to be the "protector of the people and the State." Will the military prop up a crippled government against usurpers? Or will they, as the new caudillos, take over government themselves.

All agree we don't have the luxury of time. The crisis is acquiring a momentum of its own. Real or contrived events may slam shut windows of opportunity that remain for reasoned solutions.

What if a national leader is assassinated? What if terrorists stage mass terror attacks? What if a financial crunch similar to the Asian 1977 crisis hits? What if impeachment fails again? Etc. Etc.

People want a solution that will move us beyond Ms Arroyo's personal survival, says the paper "Quo Vadis Middle Forces." An approach that reestablishes a governing capability, with some traction, to deliver better results over the long haul, is urgent.

But that's not what our "saviors" want. So, who'll save us from them?

(E-mail: juan_mercado@pacific.net.ph)

Back to basics

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

THERE'S a new argument in defense of GMA that's really bowled me over. Particularly as it has come also from people I thought knew better than to make fools of themselves. That argument says: Never mind the "Hello, Garci" tapes, you look closely at the canvassing and you'll see that GMA really won over FPJ. Maybe not by one million, but she won anyway.

I haven't just heard that line on TV in talk shows, I've been told it quite a number of times in places I've spoken. For the weirdest reason, the people saying that can't seem to grasp what's wrong with it.

At the very least, it's simply not true that if you look closely at the canvassing, you'll see that GMA won over FPJ. My good friend, Roberto Verzola, did just that with the Namfrel figures, which are more reliable than the ones produced by the Garcillano-Abalos Comelec. Based on a report Jose Concepcion himself gave the general assembly of the Bishops-Businessmen's Conference on July 8, Obet discovered some pretty eye-popping things. Among them:

One, Namfrel finished only 83 percent of its tally; it never went on to complete it. Two, the unreported 17 percent overwhelmingly represented FPJ's bailiwicks. Three, the returns on GMA's bailiwicks came faster and were reported first, FPJ's came slower and were reported much later, if at all. Four, in some areas, like Central Visayas and Eastern Visayas, where Namfrel claimed to have counted 91 percent and 93 percent of the votes, the votes exceeded the voting population by 5,992 and 50,885, respectively. Five, the votes not counted in GMA's bailiwicks totaled 1,029,243 votes while the votes not counted in FPJ's bailiwicks totaled 4,006,430. Six, in NCR alone, FPJ's bailiwick, the votes not counted added up to 1,038,329.

That by the way should also put to rest once and for all that idiotic argument, which continues to linger around like a zombie long after it's been killed, that when GMA said hello to Garci, the counting was pretty much over, it couldn't have affected it one way or the other. Which GMA herself refuted when she said she was just protecting her votes. If nothing could affect the outcome of the elections, what in hell was she trying to protect? Indeed, if nothing could affect the outcome of the elections why in hell did she make that call to begin with? The most inane soap operas have more plausible storylines.

Obet concludes on the basis of Concepcion's report and his own study that it's a tossup between GMA and FPJ: either could have won but not by more than 60,000. GMA's one million advantage over FPJ is just plain manufactured. Or put simply, cheated.

But even that is nothing, and is valuable only for the record. The point, which we may never lose sight of, is that GMA called up a senior Comelec official, and they plotted barefacedly and irrefutably to rig the results of the voting in certain parts of Muslim Mindanao. That is fact, that is not supposition. Whether GMA won or not is beside the point. Calling an election commissioner in the midst of canvassing is monumental wrongdoing. Talking about "*magpataas sa inyo*" and kidnapping an eyewitness to cheating is monumental wrongdoing. Covering it up and lying about it afterward is monumental wrongdoing. People who commit monumental wrongdoing do not deserve Malacañang, they deserve Muntinlupa.

GMA voided any claim to the presidency when she did these things, whether she actually won the election or not. These are crimes that demand punishment, not reward. None of these may be expunged by GMA promising now to reform the country. The point is basic: She has no right to. She is not the president.

What are we teaching the kids with an argument like forget the "Hello, Garci" tapes, GMA won the elections anyway? Even if true—and Obet's study remains unassailable, which we know from the fact that Bill Luz and company are at pains to assail it, relying on self-serving arguments that every respectable person in this country has determined the elections to be generally clean: like who, them?—what lessons are we imparting to the youth? If we catch a student with his arm tattooed with the answers to the questions in the final exam, are we going to refrain from expelling him because as it turns out the *codigo* wasn't really necessary since he knew the answers to the questions after all? Are we going to reward him with a scholarship to college if he can prove that he would have done better than most of his classmates anyway even if he hadn't cheated?

That is what this argument is saying. But like I said, what makes it truly astounding is that it is being purveyed by people I used to respect. I will not name them in the hope that their conscience—if they have any left; this government hasn't just eroded introspection, it has eroded self-respect—will bother them at some point.

What in God's name has happened to us? Have we lost all moral mooring altogether the concept of a president doing something as lowdown as this has now become acceptable? Have we lowered our standards so much that a candidate plotting with a Comelec official to rig the counting has now become merely qualified theft—it is wrong only if the cheater can't prove afterward she didn't need to (note the double negatives, Marcos specialized in that too)? Have we lowered our expectations so steeply we are content to accept a president who is not the president variously because she is a woman, she has a better program, or there is no one among 85 million Filipinos better than her?

Forget the economy. If we don't get ahead in life, it's simply because we have no scruples. If we don't progress as a nation, it's simply because we can't tell right from wrong.

Votes govern impeachment process

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

THE INQUIRER yesterday morning bannered the story that only 12 more votes are needed to impeach President Macapagal-Arroyo. Under the rules of the House of Representatives, if the opposition gets 79 signatures on the impeachment complaint, it will be immediately transmitted to the Senate, thus bypassing the committee on justice and a plenary vote in the chamber. All through the weekend, the opposition conducted a high-profile media propaganda, saying they were edging closer to that magic number of 79 votes. But as of 8:30 a.m. yesterday, when the opposition filed the amended complaint originally submitted by Marcos lawyer Oliver Lozano, it only had 37 signatures. Later the number rose to 40, still a far cry from the 79 needed to send it directly to the Senate.

* * *

As I was writing this column yesterday, it was unclear whether the amended complaint could still accommodate more signatures. There is a House rule that once the complaint is endorsed by the Speaker to the committee on justices, now chaired by Rep. Simeon Datumanong, additional signatures will no longer be entertained. But that rule could be amended by the committee on rules, headed by Majority Leader Prospero Nograles, which meets this morning to draft the rules for the impeachment case. I doubt, however, if additional signatures would still be accommodated at this point.

Over the weekend, I called up Speaker Jose de Venecia to inquire about the status of the amended opposition complaint. He stressed that he would not wait for the 10 session days (equivalent to one calendar month) given to him by House rules, but would transmit it posthaste to the justice committee. *Para walang masabi*, he said.

* * *

The 37 signatories were drawn mainly from the ranks of the opposition and the militant party list groups: Anakpawis, Bayan Muna, Akbayan, Gabriela and Anak Mindanao. Also affixing their signatures were seven Liberal Party representatives (out of some 34 in the House), namely, Nereus Acosta, Benigno Aquino III, Henedina Abad, Rufino Rosanno Biazon, Manuel Mamba, Lorenzo Tañada III and Reynaldo Uy. If the 34 other LP congressmen cannot be persuaded to sign the impeachment complaint, then it won't prosper.

* * *

Last weekend, the opposition decried the Palace's surprise move to file an answer to the impeachment complaint, well ahead of the scheduled time. Under the old House rules, the accused has to answer the complaint against him or her within three days of its filing. GMA, however, through her lawyer Pedro Ferrer, filed her answer last Tuesday when only the original Lozano complaint had been filed with the House. The opposition quickly decried that the sudden move was meant to preempt the filing of amendments to Lozano's complaint, since under the old House rules amendments cannot be filed to a complaint once the accused has already answered it, except with the express consent of the court (the House committee on justice) or the accused. I called up Majority Leader Nograles and he said the opposition is again overreacting. Nograles, a lawyer, said that even in court, one can still amend a civil complaint after it has been answered by the accused, or even a criminal information after a plea with leave. In the same way, he said, the House still has to formulate the rules on impeachment and there's nothing to bar the opposition from filing its amended complaint, just as GMA can also still file an amended answer.

* * *

It doubtless has not escaped notice by the public that the opposition takes its every whimper to the media where it seems to enjoy the broadest play, the media being overwhelmingly pro-opposition. I find its hysteria hilarious. Note that after Lozano filed the first impeachment complaint, the opposition cried that the Lozano complaint was a Palace ploy as it was defective and infirm. The opposition complained that Lozano's move preempted them from filing their own complaint, because under the rules only one impeachment complaint can be filed against an official within a given year. But after all the hue and cry, the opposition was assured they could amend and "strengthen" the Lozano complaint. It then grandly announced that it would submit 10 amendments embodying about 100 charges against GMA—a shotgun approach. It also posted a website address where it encouraged the citizens to come up with charges against GMA. Last week, it said it would file the amended complaint Tuesday and then moved that to Thursday. Finally, it materialized yesterday morning. But the Palace, apparently not wanting to be constricted by the opposition's amended deadline, filed its answer before then.

* * *

The posting of a website and the difficulty it had meeting its self-imposed deadlines were quickly interpreted to mean the opposition was still fishing in the Internet for charges against GMA, and had no hard evidence. The problem is that this impeachment process, to which GMA has submitted herself, has rules to govern it. The opposition, sensing perhaps that it would fail to impeach her, either because it does not have strong evidence or the numbers, now seeks to discredit the process in the media. The impeachment process is a game in which every turn will be subjected to a vote. Assuming the committee on justice issues a report favoring impeachment (highly unlikely given that GMA's allies dominate it), one vote more than the two-thirds of the plenary of the House is needed to transmit the Articles of Impeachment to the Senate, where 16 votes are needed to convict her. If the House plenary does not yield the numbers, that move is killed. House leaders have promised transparency every step of the way, but ultimately, it will still be up to the vote of just one more than the two-thirds majority.

The media ought to be on their guard against being used to discredit the impeachment process.

Nip cancer in the bud!

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

LAST Sunday, I was invited to be a guest speaker at the "First Cancer Fun Run" sponsored by Bosom Care, a Bacolod-based support group composed of breast-cancer survivors and their families, dedicated to helping other breast-cancer survivors, especially indigent women. With the slogan "Nip cancer in the bud!" the Fun Run drew a record 12,000 participants from civic groups, business firms and schools.

The activity was able to raise almost P200,000, to be used partly to provide free mammograms and other services (like consultations, up-front chemotherapy, and even funeral assistance) to women who cannot afford such services. The rest of the money will be used to build up Bosom Care's savings to meet the Securities and Exchange Commission's recently-revised requirement for foundation registration of P1 million, which Bosom Care president Cecile Locsin-Nava says is an unjust imposition on "genuine" NGOs like theirs with no funding or institutional support.

Bosom Care's free mammogram program began last year in cooperation with Riverside Medical Center, and with the recent acquisition of a mammogram machine by the Corazon Locsin Montelibano Regional Hospital, donated by a group of nurses based in Houston who trained with the hospital's nursing school. Locsin-Nava says they hope to offer even more free mammograms to women at risk.

Here are excerpts from my talk, based on a bare outline written just as our plane was touching down at the Bacolod airport. I hope the message came through just the same.

* * *

I FIRST made my acquaintance with breast cancer through three women with the disease, one of whom is no longer with us.

My niece Kara Magsanoc-Alikpala shocked all of us in the family when news reached us that she had been diagnosed with breast cancer when she was only in her early 30s. But hers has been a remarkable story not just of recovery and survival but also of continuing service. Soon after she completed her chemotherapy, she got married and a few years later, even after doctors warned her that she might not ever be able to get pregnant, she did get pregnant and bore a healthy baby girl. Today she is an active advocate for the breast-cancer survivors' community and has published a booklet on resources for breast-cancer survivors and their families called "I Can Serve."

Soon after I heard of Kara's illness, I met Rosa Meneses in an international conference on breast cancer. With her husband Danny, she organized the Philippine Breast Cancer Network that sought to raise awareness about the disease in our country, especially the need for early detection and treatment. Rosa died some years ago, but only after she had offered her life story as an inspirational example to all cancer survivors. Danny has since carried on with the advocacy to which his wife had devoted her remaining years.

Finally, there is my cousin Rose Braganza, who continues her valiant battle against the disease. I have seen first-hand how she has gone through the pain and anxiety of treatment, while striving always to remain her good-natured and gracious self. I ask all of you today to remember in your prayers Rose and countless women doing battle with breast cancer. Your presence at this "Fun Run" is a heartwarming sight, reassurance that you care enough about the issue to get out of your comfortable beds on a beautiful Sunday morning just to raise funds for free mammograms and other forms of support for women with breast cancer and their families.

* * *

HERE are some dismaying facts about breast cancer in the Philippines:

The Philippines has the highest prevalence of breast cancer in Asia. But while no one knows exactly why so many Filipino women are afflicted with breast cancer, everyone knows why so many die from it. While breast cancer is easily managed if detected early enough, few Filipino women are aware that they need to go for regular detection procedures, either through breast self-exams, exams conducted by trained health personnel, or through mammograms. Too often, women come for treatment only when it is too late for surgery or chemotherapy.

Women are dying from breast and other forms of cancer not just because of the disease itself, but because of lack of access to even the most basic health services.

In the case of cervical cancer, which kills more Filipino women each year than even breast cancer, there has long been a cheap, reliable and accurate method for detecting it, known as the "pap smear." And yet, while the pap smear has been around for so long, not too many Filipino women know about the procedure and the advantages to be gained from regular screening.

* * *

WE all dream of a better world, but that better world will be possible only if we work hard for it.

Together, let us all dream and work for a world where every woman would be aware of breast cancer; where every woman would know how to conduct a breast self-exam and afford regular mammograms; and would be able to access the treatment she needs.

Together, let us all dream and work for a world where every woman would be able to afford a pap smear or other reliable forms of cervical cancer screening, and again have access to treatment if and when she needs it. Together, let us all dream and work for a world where no woman need die because of pregnancy or childbirth, and where being poor or ignorant need not be a barrier to the enjoyment of good health.

Thank you again for being here this morning. And even if I'm not exactly wearing running or walking shoes, rest assured that I will walk anywhere, and run as far I need to, to join in the fight to save women's lives and defeat this disease known as breast cancer!

The Mindanao problem

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L. Harper

FEW of us are aware of or knowledgeable enough with regard to the economic and social dimensions involved in the on-going struggle in Mindanao. We all know that the conflict has been lasted a long time, but the issue has never been fully clarified to the general public. There is the preconceived notion of the Moro as untrustworthy, violent and unsanitary. Lately another dimension has been added, which is the alleged link to global terrorists. Little has been done to alter this image by the government or the Muslims themselves.

Like many other issues in our national life, the problem started way before any of us was even aware there was a problem. It was obvious from the start that there were cultural and language barriers as well as religions differences and what was perceived as Manila's intolerance of other religions outside of Roman Catholicism. Because of the Muslim raids even before the coming of the Spaniards, there was fear of Moro pirates who once attacked coastal villages in search of slaves as well as of the *juramentado* who could only be stopped by the Colt 45.

The Moros, it was believed, viewed Filipinos with contempt because we had submitted to the colonizers while they had fought the Spaniards for 300 years. They believed Mindanao was their land and were apprehensive that their Islamic customs would be changed.

Before World War II, there were Americans who ventured and invested in Mindanao. One of them, Vic Hurley ("The Story of the Moro," 1936), had 400 Muslim employees. When the question of independence for Mindanao was being discussed in Congress there were discussions:

"Is it true, Señor," one asked, "that the Americans are going to leave and turn Mindanao and Sulu over to the Filipinos?"

"I only know what I see in the papers, Asari," Hurley replied. "Maybe independence will be granted and America will go home."

"If that be so, Señor, we must sharpen our krises. We love Americans and we trust them, but we cannot endure Filipino rule and we will die fighting."

Another Moro told him: "I will never be able to hold my men in check under the rule of Filipinos. They will take to the hills and will never submit. The old days of jungle warfare I saw 30 years ago will return to Mindanao and Sulu."

Hurley's words and observations appear prophetic half a century later. At the time the Muslims were outnumbered but Hurley believed that "in the event of armed resistance…they would have the advantage of fighting on their own soil and under conditions to their liking. Small bands of Moros, deep in the interior jungle, would be difficult to exterminate, and the cleaning up process, if successful at all, might well continue for many years."

Although the Muslims had been disarmed by the Americans and could not even carry a kris, they could make shotguns from iron pipes and ambushes of Filipino soldiers would provide them with modern weapons. (Apparently the Constabulary then wasn't in the habit of selling its arms to them.) The government did not take into consideration either that someday aid might well come from neighboring Islamic countries rich with oil money or that the world would grow smaller with faster planes and ships so that arms could be easily smuggled.

The Moros were outspoken in their opposition to Filipino rule. In 1910, Datu Mandi, in a speech before Secretary of War Dickinson, stated: "I am here, El Rajah Mura Mandi, representing the Moros. Here they are, the whole crowd of them, come to honor the secretary of war. As I look about, I see far more Moros than Filipinos; that is the reason it is called the Moro Province. When America first came here, from the very beginning, whatever they asked me to do, I did. I was loyal to them ever—now I hear a rumor that we Moros are in the hands of the Filipinos."

During the same meeting, the Moro Sacaluran came forward to address Dickinson: "I am an old man. I do not want any more trouble. But if it should come to that, that we are to be given over to the Filipinos, I still would fight."

Ulankaya then arose and addressed the Secretary of War: "I am not a civilized man but I have learned that slavery, killing and stealing are a bad thing. But if we are given over to another race, we had better all be hanged."

During the Rizal Day parade in Zamboanga in 1923, the Moros carried placards announcing: "We Moros are not with the Christian Filipinos in their asking for independence" and "The voices of the Moros are not heard in Manila except by our friend General Wood" and "Whether independence be given the Filipinos or not, we wish our Moro country to be segregated from Luzon and the Visayan islands."

All this, of course, is water under the bridge but as Hurley observed; "The understanding must be based, not upon the superior numbers and armed forces of the Filipinos, but upon mutual confidence and trust."

Fifty years later, have we gained their confidence and trust?

Lost idealism

YOUNG BLOOD

Patricia Joy M. Aguila

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—**Ed.**

I'M still a year away from adulthood but I have long lost my idealism.

Idealism is supposedly the edge of the youth over their elders, and it is what makes younger politicians more attractive than *trapos*. This is apparently the distinguishing characteristic of youth: the hope that everything will be all right and that we can change things. Many of my friends still think that way but I do not.

Not anymore.

I'm not idealistic. I believe no form of government can be effective enough for everybody. Everyone will always have different opinions, views and beliefs. There will always be discrimination based on age, race, religion and nationality. Power will always corrupt. I'm a cynic, I guess.

Actually, I've held this view from the time I was a high school senior. My friends would talk about politics, our relations with the United States and our own government and officials. They would suggest solutions to problems and engage in small debates and I would refuse to take sides since I knew everyone was correct.

During our first meeting, our English teacher in college told our class that the youth should never lose their idealism. I sadly said to myself, "I have already lost mine."

A few days ago, our social science teacher invited someone to give a talk to our class. Welcoming the change, I listened. But I quickly realized that the speaker was trying to get us to support calls for the ouster of President Macapagal-Arroyo. He gave many reasons, including the tape scandal.

When one of my classmates stood up to defend GMA, some kind of debate ensued, until the teacher cut it short. Our guest then summed up his proposals for our nation. He said that once the President steps down, a group made up of representatives of the poor, the youth, business, etc. would lead the nation

I kept muttering, "It won't work." And it won't. I'm dealing with facts here. If you give power to anyone, the power will consume him as the ring consumed Smeagol. The poor will disagree with business, the youth will never be trusted, etc. It is sad, but I would rather settle for a mediocre president because right now there seems to be nobody better. I'm all for keeping Ms Arroyo for the sole reason that if Noli de Castro succeeds her, he will bring us more tears and heartaches.

Our guest invited us to some kind of seminar that Friday and passed out a piece paper for us to sign. No one in our class signed. I was ashamed because I believed most of my classmates were simply afraid to get involved. I would have signed that paper and gone to the rally had I agreed with their cause.

In a way I'm contradicting myself. I'm a cynic, but, I believe everyone should take up a cause and fight for it. I think the only people I can trust are the youth because I don't like adults who look down on our idealism. I can't force myself to believe that things will change in a snap, that there is some way to change everything and make everyone happy.

I am a cynic but I salute all idealists out there. I commend them for their faith. Someday I'll believe in something that has no logic, too.

Patricia Joy M. Aguila, 17, is an BS industrial engineering freshman at the University of the Philippines in Diliman.

Anesthesia

Rutchel Claro

I CHOOSE apathy.

Like a patient who is about to undergo a major operation, it is best to anesthetize the whole human system to shield it from tremendous pain. The cuts and probing of medical instruments will not be felt while the drug works. As the patient settles into a deep slumber, life goes on around him.

Yet, there is the danger of not waking up if too much of the numbing drug is taken in. When that happens, the system shuts down, death claims the body, and one moves on to another world (or so I would like to believe). It's a world that is totally different from the world of the living. And I believe it's a world devoid of pain, sorrow and desolate living.

Please allow me to keep this little illusion, as I try to shield my tired mind from the harsh realities of life. Considering the circus that we call the Philippine government, I choose to wallow in disgust and apathy. I am so exhausted that I can no longer rant and cry over my sad fate of being born in this generation and witnessing the sick machinations of various players. I once believed that if you had knowledge and guts and believed in the system, anything was possible. I was educated in an institution that allowed us to believe that sovereignty was no longer monopolized by the powers-that-be. And that instead, new information, technology and capital would allow the individual to be a player in the economic and political arena.

However, because of recent events, all these preconceived notions of globalization and becoming a sovereign individual have been relegated to the trash bin. Our leaders have led us down the path of patronage politics, sinking further our economy and increasing poverty even as they continue to bicker. Sadly, our society is regressing to the primitive ages when one's success or survival was determined by brawn, muscle and money.

My friends were quite excited on the Friday when key Cabinet officials announced their resignations. But I kept mum the whole time that they were discussing the issues. When they asked me to explain my silence, I just stared blankly into space.

I cannot help but feel like I am on the brink of losing my sanity as I try to get a grip on what is happening to my country. Sometimes I think too much democracy is the reason we make so many wayward choices as a people. Why, we even choose leaders of questionable capabilities. I mean we have only ourselves to blame for the series of unfortunate events.

So I am opting for apathy to keep myself from slashing my wrists or getting entangled in the vicious cycle of our political life and pathetic economy. Throughout history, different generations chose different ways of confronting the status quo. Aguinaldo and Bonifacio chose armed struggle. Rizal and Aquino took the parliamentary road. Lean Alejandro chose the national democratic path. Thousands of men and women of the First Quarter Storm chose to rally in Mendiola. Many ended up as heroes and very much dead.

I am a child of the 1980s and I have witnessed rapid changes brought about by industrialization, cosmopolitanism, "metrosexualism," Korean novelas, F4, Michael Jackson, 9-11, the death of the Pope, Erap, FVR, GMA and lately Garci. I need anesthesia to be relieved of the intense pain.

Rutchel, 26, is a member of the sales staff of a transnational company.

Remedies for a chief exec's moral disability

THE CONSTITUTION provides that in case of permanent disability on the part of a sitting president, the vice president succeeds and shall serve the unexpired term. If the disability is only temporary, the vice president shall act as president while the disability lasts. Referred to here is physical disability.

James L. Sundquist, in his book "Constitutional Reform and Effective Government," talks of a different kind of disability which he calls "moral disability." He explains that this occurs when a president loses the capacity to lead the country because of a scandal involving him, which may not be an impeachable offense. Resignation would be a constitutional alternative, but the fact remains that it is a purely voluntary act.

A demand for the President to resign is at best a social force which carries no legal compulsion. Against a strong-willed President, it can achieve nothing except to divide and perhaps destroy the country. What do we do then with a president involved in a scandal who refuses to resign?

Sundquist notes that during the Watergate scandals, three amendments to the American Constitution were proposed:

The Bingham Resolution, which sought to authorize Congress to pass a law—by two-thirds majorities of both houses—calling a new presidential election whenever Congress perceives that the president has lost the people's trust to such an extent that he could no longer perform his duties. The president could run in the special election, which could show whether or not he has retained or lost the confidence of the people. The procedure was meant to circumvent the impeachment process which, the bill's proponent argued, was dangerous because it could bring the government to a halt while the president was on trial.

The Green Resolution was substantially the same proposal. However, it provided that the bill calling for a new election need not be submitted to the president for approval or disapproval if it is found that he had exceeded his powers, failed to execute the laws, or executed them illegally. The proposal allowed the president to run in the special election.

The Reuss Resolution sought to permit Congress to remove the president by a no-confidence vote of 60 percent of each house. However, as a deterrent to opportunistic, partisan action, it provided that all seats in Congress as well as the presidency and vice presidency be filled in a new election.

President Nixon resigned in 1974, and the issue of what to do with a president who refuses to resign died a natural death. The Americans "relaxed in confidence that once again the system worked."

The Bingham, Green and Reuss resolutions deserve serious study and consideration by us because of the situation we're now in.

—SALETO J. ERAMES
City Councilor,
Dumaguete City

Talking of martial law?

I MUST agree with the PDI's July 7 banner story: there are better leaders than President Macapagal-Arroyo.

That having been said, and considering that we are a democracy where the will of the majority has to be respected, we now must confront these questions:

1. Who decides who will succeed President Arroyo? Sen. Aquilino Pimentel? Sen. Francisco Tatad? Gen. Fortunato Abat? Susan Roces? Where would their mandate come from? Can they really speak for the majority?

2. We have a Constitution that provides precisely for changing presidents. What would be the legal and valid basis for scrapping the Constitution?

3. If we can do away with the Constitution, why are we selective? Should we not logically do away with the legislature and judiciary also?

4. Have those advocating extra-legal steps considered what faces the country should their recommendation be followed? Who will administer the government? Who will collect taxes? Who will pay salaries and expenses? Who will protect the country and our people? If the answer is a provisional government, where will its mandate and authority come from? Why should we obey them or are we talking of martial law?

—BIENVENIDO A. TAN JR.,
Unit 7A The Valero Tower,
122 Valero St.,
Salcedo Village, Makati City

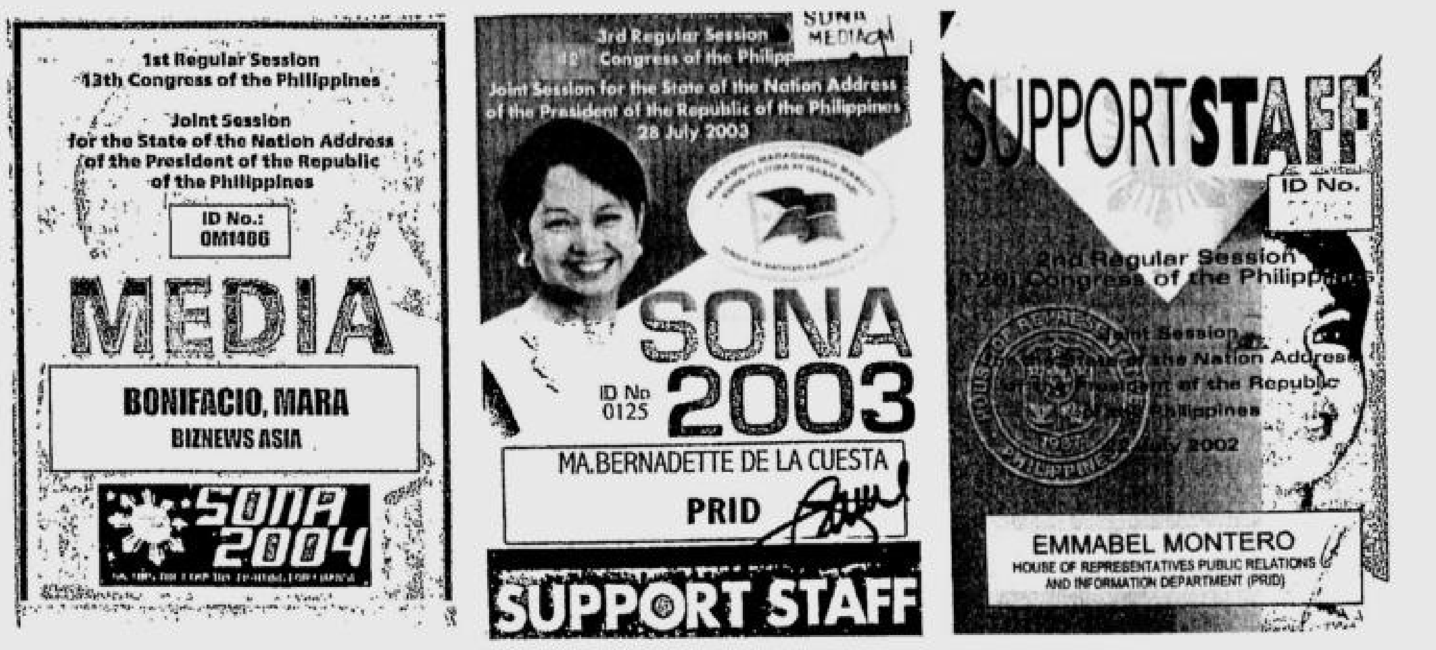
Grand derby

SINCE arriving in the Philippines more than three years ago, I have made an effort not to miss a single issue of the INQUIRER. Along with its editorials, I particularly appreciate its world-class design and graphics. Your artists deserve particular praise for the July 14 front page.

The graphic "National Grand Derby" is the best political caricature I have seen for a long time. As a devoted analyst of Philippine politics, I briefly considered actually framing it and hanging it in my office. But I thought it might not be a good idea as some of the political players depicted in the graphic may choose to change their positions in the near future. (This would not surprise me.)

All this said, I encourage the INQUIRER to bring us an update of its "National Grand Derby" cartoon every now and then.

—RONALD MEINARDUS,
Makati City


1st Regular Session
13th Congress of the Philippines
Joint Session for the State of the Nation Address of the President of the Republic of the Philippines
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3rd Regular Session
12th Congress of the Philippines
Joint Session for the State of the Nation Address of the President of the Republic of the Philippines
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2nd Regular Session
12th Congress of the Philippines
Joint Session
State of the Nation Address
President of the Republic
Philippines
July 2002
EMMABEL MONTERO
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES PUBLIC RELATIONS AND INFORMATION DEPARTMENT (PRID)

PRESS cards for SONA; Where's GMA picture this time?

Who says GMA was impeached?

THIS is in reaction to the INQUIRER front-page story titled "House 'impeaches' Arroyo from press cards for Sona." (PDI, 7/23/05) We wish to clarify that the media identification cards issued by our office for the President's State of the Nation Address bear texts that is no different from the previous Sona IDs.

The President's name has never been spelled out in the IDs as a matter of tradition and protocol. While President Macapagal-Arroyo's image appeared as part of the ID design in 2002 and 2003, it was not carried in last year's IDs. Thus, the purely speculative slant of your story did a disservice to your readers and to the truth.

—EMMANUEL A. ALBANO,
deputy secretary general,
Public Relations
and Information Department,
concurrent director,
Media Affairs Service,
House of Representatives,
Quezon City

I STAND by my story. For instance, the President's photo appeared in the 2003 ID cards distributed to the media.

—MICHAEL LIM UBAC

The confession of Nehemiah

"THE NEHEMIAH 9 Challenge" and "The 9 o'clock Night Prayer Crusade" are our response to the difficult and disgraceful situation our country is in. Started last June 23, we continue to call on everyone to take up this challenge.

This is not a call to take sides in the ongoing political gymnastics, but we do call on everyone to make a stand—"Stand up and praise the Lord your God, who is from everlasting to everlasting." (Nehemiah 9:5)

The cacophony generated by partisan shouts, noise barrage and rallies confounds an already confusing circumstance, further preventing us from hearing the voice of God or sensing His presence, alive and at work in our midst. In response to all this, we propose the command of Psalm 46:10—"Be still, and know that I am God."

We thus invite everyone to a minute of silent reflection nightly at 9 o'clock on the following: Think (T) of God's love and faithfulness to us, Filipinos; Remember (R) the miracles that God have performed for our country; and Thank (T) God for His goodness and graciousness to our nation and people.

"The Nehemiah 9 Challenge" is from the Old Testament Book of Nehemiah, Chapter 9 where Nehemiah, the cupbearer to the king of Persia, calls on all of Israel to repent and confess their disobedience and rebellion against God. Under the leadership of this layman, they rebuilt the broken walls of the City of Jerusalem and undertook the reformation of their nation.

For however this may be worth your comment, may this bring glory and honor to God. And for whatever good it may bring to our nation and people, may it personally challenge you to pray the confession of Nehemiah.

—BRO. RAMON A. LOZANA,
Servi Dei Ministries,
10th Street, Bacolod City

'Impitsmento'

LIKE any citizen, I have been watching television shows and listening to radio programs discussing the alleged telephone conversations between Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano. In the process, I have heard public officials, resource persons, television talk show hosts, radio commentators, news reporters and other speakers repeatedly use words like "*aspeto*," "*elemento*," "*ehekutibo*," "*teknolohiya*," "*anarkiya*," "*alternatibo*" and "*konteksto*." Earlier basketball officiating language would have called this "charging" or "forcing through." In yesteryears, it could have been condemned as "trying hard."

With all due respect and apology, I find the practice cheapening, debasing, sickening, revolting. It is acknowledged that Pilipino, as a language, should be allowed to grow. But it should not be as a parasite simply adding "o" or "a" to the English word.

I find it imperative to voice this urgent concern at this time as the country might soon be embroiled in a proceeding we might call "*impitsmento*."

—EFREN C. CARAG,
4 Lataña St., Tahanan Village,
Parañaque City

Jaguar X-type car not issued by Philcomsat

OUR client, Enrique L. Locsin, personally came to us on July 12, 2005, to bring to our attention some matters pertaining to him that appeared in Vic Agustin's column in the July 1, 2005 issue of the INQUIRER.

Agustin stated in his column that Locsin availed himself of a Philcomsat-paid Jaguar X-type car right after assuming his position in the Philcomsat board.

Locsin denies that he availed himself of a company-paid Jaguar X-type car (or any Jaguar vehicle for that matter). The Jaguar car that Locsin drives has been paid for with his own money.

We have seen the documents that Locsin brought to prove that the Jaguar car that he owns has not been acquired through Philcomsat, and we are convinced of the authenticity of those documents. Among the documents shown to us by Locsin is a certification from the Philcomsat corporate secretary, certifying that the company has never issued any Jaguar vehicle to Locsin.

Locsin wishes that the above clarifications be made by Agustin himself in one of his future columns in the INQUIRER.

—ORTEGA, DEL CASTILLO, BACORRO,
ODULIO, CALMA & CARBONELL,
Alpap I Bldg., 5th and 6th floors,
140 LP Leviste St., Salcedo Village,
Makati City

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INQBOX

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Do you think the planned image makeover of President Gloria Arroyo into a friendlier, gentler president will work?

No. D country doesn't need a friendly or gentle president now. It needs a repentant 1 who will see beyond herself & do reparation.
—jen nam-on, *makati*

It cud help but i prefer a combative president. Reforms can't b wishd4, it must b fought4 vs d corrupt hu wud kill 4 d status quo. Help her.
—rene locsin, *QC*

image makeover cant do anything 2 cover up a perceivd wrongdoing. Good P.R. is stil GOOD PERFORMANCE!
—rene san, 50, *san juan, la union*

everythng wil work if other politicians and d people cooperate wid d president rather than shouting in d streets.
—leianne razon, *parañaque*

dati nang maganda si GMA. What we need is an honest pres. Then, dat sweet smile wud be a bonus.
—Romeo Vicencio, 41, *Nueva Ecija*

no, just a waste of taxpayers money. D best way is for her 2 remove so many misfits n political accommodations in her bureaucracy
—gerry singson, *vigan city*

an image makeovr wil not work unless its done with sincerity. a sincere makeover cant b done overnyt, it wil just deceive.
—chris jark ace maño, 19, *caloocan*

it will help a little, what we need is a serious leadership and not broken promises, and peace.
—Loida, 31, *Koronadal City*

hehe, anOng akala nla sa mga tao? Uto2x?! Waepek n yan! Ang panget kahit magpamake-up, PANGET p rn! Rklamo?!?!!!
—junnie vee d. hongco, 17, *iloilo*

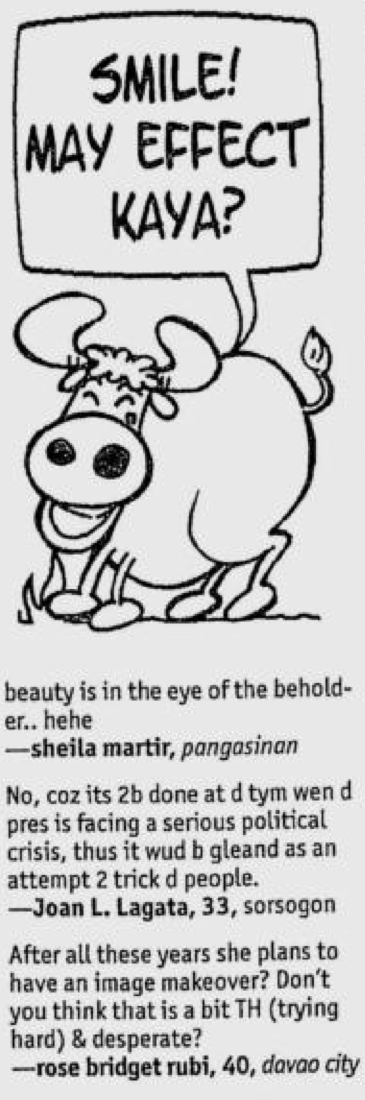
NO. its just like SAME OLD SONGS But played in DIFFERENT TUNES
—ryan lim, 21, *cagayan de oro city*

YES, because if she will do it, MAYBE HER POPULARITY RATE will INCREASE and the PEOPLE will RESPECT HER MORE.
—Xervy Ray AGUILAR, 17, *parañaque*

no becoz d people of d philipines has already a cloud of doubt and it wil be very hard 4 dem 2 accept whatever changes will happen.
—jose francisco dizon, 36, *olongapo*

di na kailangan ng image makeover, as long as magawa niyang pag-isahin ang bawat Pilipino. Kaya natin 2! AJA!!!
—Dennis Vincent Salubo, 20, *Malaybalay City*

NO, Gma seen as tough & firm pres. 2 change her image it'l make her a cheap pres. she's a leader, not a matinee idol.
—Ma. Lenore n.delos santos, 27, *pampanga*


SMILE! MAY EFFECT KAYA?

beauty is in the eye of the beholder.. hehe
—sheila martir, *pangasinan*

No, coz its 2b done at d tym wen d pres is facing a serious political crisis, thus it wud b gleand as an attempt 2 trick d people.
—Joan L. Lagata, 33, sorsogon

After all these years she plans to have an image makeover? Don't you think that is a bit TH (trying hard) & desperate?
—rose bridget rubi, 40, *davao city*

no! A monkey wil always be a monkey!
—Elwood, 28, *ligao*

No, d image makeovr did not work b4,and it wil not work now. she wil always b one arrogant and smirking woman.
—justin urquico, 64, *bislig city*

No, it wOnt work. It wil Only iritate d pipol mOre bcos we nOw see its plastic of her. we have seen d real her for almOst 4 years. No, it wOnt work. ppl have exprienced enuf frm her 2 stil b deceived. we knOw dats its a change 2 court d ppol 2 4get her crym
—nel Garcia, 25, *urdaneta cty*

NO!definately not. kung baga sa plaka, "gasgas KANA."Ü
—Gary Tindoc, 28, *Cagayan de Oro City*

Whatever makeover d do, majority filipinos wont believe anymore President Arroyo, so better to quit. She must resign or voluntarily step down as pres. 4 the benefit of the majority of Filipinos.
—Reynaldo Go Jr, 30, *Quezon City*

For me, di na kaya ng image makeover, its 2 hard to heal d broken dreams and hopes of d Filipino people.
—Dennis Vincent Salubo, 20, *Malaybalay City*

kahit ANO BASTA HINOG sa PILIT ay maasim, U can make HER AS MEEK AS MOTHER THERESA but still inside R FULL OF dead bones
—Ariel Aligaen, 31, *trece martirez*

It wil work but not now, stil filipinos remembered wat she did and our politicians' non-stop discussions
—jose ruel t. Borlongan, 35, *san pablo city*

NO, it wil not work. a broken crystal shall 4ever be broken no matter how hard u polish or clean it. just lyk a name.. NO, image make over will not do anything, considering that the people see her as a cheater
—richard p sobrepeña, 27, *sn jose cty*

No not now dat she is under intrigue. Dis is possible after crossing d bridge dat she has 2, plus now which will give her real image.
—NestorV.Del Carmen, 46, *Bulacan*

NO dahil alam na ng taOng bayan ang totoO kya ang dapat nyang gawin mag-resign nalang
—MA.cherryl ANGUAS, 21, *makati city*

she shud qualify 2 whom wil she b friendlier & gentler. hopefully not 2 criminals & scalawags.
—louie m. diazderivera, *lapulapu*

I don't think it will work, people look at what d president is doing and on good governance, NOT on d image! Ü
—Mark Anthony Gueco, 26, *Makati*

"no more, ang bwitre dmitan mo man ng balahibo ng maamong kalapati ay bwitre pa rin!"
—Gil S. Santos, *Pasig City*

NO. APPLYING image makeover to a vulture DOESNT MAKE IT look like a PARROT. Madam president should be NATURAL, NOT ARTIFICIAL!
—Mics Obles, 29, *Baguio City*

NO, her MAKEOVER most likely will MOVE HER OVER!
—may g. malapitan, *quezon city*

No, bcoze some pip|l think dat d image makeover is rather a plastic COver…
—shinju cawis, *tabuk, kalinga*

Image make over! Naah! She done it before and look at the result. And add to the fact that people are skeptical towards her action.
—ronnie que, *manila*

I dont think it wil work anymor bcoz its her credibility dat was lost. its very hard 2 restore & no amount of makeover can conceal it
—Kristoffer Noble, 25, *manila*

the planned makeover would just make her the epitome of hypocrisy!
—benjie atutubo, 37, *legazpi city*

No. Knowing d attitude of filipinos, d image of d president wil not change whatever she wil do
—fernando laus, 31, *baguio city*

ang makeover panlabas. Eh ang problema ung panloob. Maganda man ang nitso, bulok pa rin ung loob!
—ramon g. lukban, *quezon city*

It will not work because many Filipinos do not trust her anymore.
—Gloria R. Esguerra, 26, *Cabanatuan*

NO, d people hav lost confidence when she faild 2 deliver after 4 years n d palace.
—Aida Estevez, 36, *Masbate City*

i hope so! but pls include her make-up. add some color to her face & hair to tone down her snobbish looks!
—tintin chavez, 39, *cotabato city*

i think it is not goin 2 work anymore bcoz majority of the pipol dont trust her anymore. She's doing the makeover just to save her bad reputation 2 d people, and she is not doing it for the country.
—LloydBulaclac, 23, *CotabatoCity*

As a mother, the present political crisis demands total cleansing and makeover. GMA shud provide leadership by example & should not tolerate corruption which is felt all over the country. As a mother, she should think of leaving good government as a legacy.
—Ching Plaza, 45, *butuan city*

No, the planned image makeover wont work.. Just remain as she is. But double the effort in pursuing her reforms.
—Antonio Andaluz, 48, *Parañaque City*

NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU
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Fax No. (074)443-6971
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23 Aurora St., Old Albay District
Legazpi City
Tel. No. (052) 820-8402
Fax No. (052) 820-1274
E-mail: inq_bicol@inquirer.com.ph

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MILF extends deadline for Abu hunt

COTABATO CITY—Government forces pursuing Abu Sayyaf bandits in the hinterlands of Maguindanao were given another 72 hours to launch offensives against the bandit group without jeopardizing the Mindanao peace process.

The 72-hour extension was given by the government and Moro Islamic Liberation Front's Ad Hoc Joint Action Group (Ahjag) for the soldiers to capture dead or alive Khadaffy Janjalani and his followers.

Lawyer Abdul Dataya, MILF-Adjag chair, said both the MILF and the government peace panels agreed to extend the "vacation" of MILF rebels from Camp Bader in Guindolongan, Maguindanao to give government soldiers ample time to pursue the Abu Sayyaf leader and his men.

The extension would end midnight of July 27.

Deadline

"Until such time, the 500-man MILF fighters who vacated their camp would return from their temporary location in the Liguasan Marsh," Dataya told reporters.

Maj. Gen. Agustin Dema-ala, 6th Infantry Division chief, said the unfavorable weather condition in Maguindanao has affected the movement of ground troops, majority of whom were "graduates" of RP-US Balikatan Exercises in Zamboanga and Basilan.

Giving way

"If we continue the operation, hopefully the government would end up with Janjalani and his men in its hands," Dema-ala told reporters.

On July 21, the MILF agreed to reposition its troops away from the target of the ongoing operations, and will return to their base as soon as this operation is terminated.

The reposition of MILF troops was witnessed by the Malaysian-led International Monitoring Team [IMT] headed by Maj. Gen. Dato' Zulkifeli Bin Mohamad Zain, who has been getting accolades and praises for his active and nonpartisan role in the implementation of the ceasefire agreement between the MILF and the government.

The IMT, unless extended by the government and MILF peace panels, will end its tour of duty in Mindanao in October this year.

Eid Kabalu, speaking for the MILF, said the MILF forces are not "physically" involved in the operations.

Goodwill

"Our moving out of Camp Bader is a gesture of goodwill to the peace process," he told the INQUIRER, adding that it would have been different if the MILF forces were directly involved in the hunt for Janjalani.

"The result would have been different," Kabalu said.

About two battalions of soldiers backed by helicopter gunships have been pursuing about 25 bandits led by Janjalani since July 1.

The towns of Datu Unsay Ampatuan and Datu Saudi Ampatuan have been included in the coverage of the operation, in addition to the towns of Datu Odin Sinsuat, Talayan, Guindolongan, and South Upi, all in Maguindanao.

Thousands of civilians have evacuated to safer grounds at a time when their upland rice are due for harvesting.

Most of the evacuees are now housed in schools and barangay halls in Muti in Guindolongan, Lambayao, Ahan, Midtimbang, and Tamar in Talayan, and those from the interior parts of Datu Odin Sinsuat and South Upi have evacuated to Dalican and Timanan. *Edwin O. Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

TAT OF THE BANGSAMO

MUSLIM leaders hold a State of Bangsamoro Address as they voice out their grievances against the government in a rally in Taguig. Some of their brothers in Mindanao have chosen to take up arms instead.

ERIK ARAZAS

MILF, gov't talks in KL postponed by Malaysia

COTABATO CITY—The Malaysian government postponed the roundtable discussion between the Philippine government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), which was supposed to be held in Kuala Lumpur yesterday.

MILF chief negotiator Mohagher Iqbal yesterday told the INQUIRER the rebel group received the notice of postponement last Friday.

Iqbal said there was no reason given for the postponement.

"Usually the Malaysian government informs us if the peace talks will push through or not five-to-six days ahead of the schedule meeting. But (on Friday), we received notice of the postponement," Iqbal said.

During the scheduled discussion on July 25-26, government and MILF negotiators were expected to discuss proposals for self-rule, ranging from independence to a federal state.

Eid Kabalu, MILF spokesperson, said Malaysia did not indicate when the talks would push through.

"We have no idea. We will just wait," he said.

During the June 21 exploratory talks held in the Malaysian capital, the government and the MILF aired satisfaction with the positive achievements of the Ad-Hoc Joint Action Group (Ahjag). *Jeoffrey Maitem, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Leaders seek ways to carry out no torture policy in town

PROTECT HUMAN RIGHTS!
PROTECT HUMAN RIGHTS!

INFANTA, Quezon—Multi-sectoral representatives here held a round-table meeting on Friday and discussed ways to implement the torture-free zone resolution adopted by the local municipal council to address the escalating human rights violations in the area.

Infanta Councilor Ismael Villeno, author of Municipal Resolution No. 107-S. 2004, said the meeting was a concrete step to forming a local working group, which will be composed of local government officials, police, military, church people and nongovernment organizations.

Villeno, a member of Task Force Detainees of the Philippines, said he believed that involving law enforcement agencies and local government officials in the working group would strengthen the mechanisms of check and balance, and would ensure that human rights are protected and respected.

According to Jerbert Briola, TFDP-Southern Luzon regional coordinator, they had already documented five cases of human rights violations of hundreds of individuals, mostly indigenous peoples.

The cases range from torture, illegal arrest and detention and displacement of families due to the government's counter-insurgency operations, Briola said.

He said the round-table discussion was held not only to ensure the implementation of the municipal resolution but also to educate local government officials, especially those involved in law enforcement and protection of human rights.

"We hope that by educating the government and military officials, preventive measures could be instituted so as to stop the practice of torture and other forms of human rights violation from happening," Briola said.

The meeting was attended by local officials, police, military, religious and different nongovernment organizations.

In a related development, the indigenous tribes in the Sierra Madre ranges in General Nakar, Quezon appealed to New People's Army rebels and government forces to recognize tribal communities as peace zones after a recent encounter in their place left most of the residents in fear, houses destroyed and relief goods and farm implements ransacked.

In a statement sent to the INQUIRER, the northern Quezon tribesmen known as Agta (Adhikain ng mga Grupong Taong Katutubo na Nagtatanggol sa Lupaing Ninuno) asked the NPA to stop making their communities as places of sanctuary and for the military to also cease conducting patrols in their area. *Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

3,000 DA men protest delay in ₱2,000 allowance

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—The P2,000 monthly transportation allowance of some 3,000 Department of Agriculture employees in Central Luzon has not been paid since January, DA employees said.

Cesar Rodriguez, DA regional director, said the amount should come from the local government units (LGUs) since the DA's employees and programs were devolved to them in 1991 under the Local Government Code (Republic Act 7160).

Rodriguez said local officials have even signed special orders agreeing to support the transportation expenses of agriculture personnel assigned to the Ginintuang Masaganang Ani programs on rice, corn, high value commercial crops, fishery and livestock.

The programs sought to increase the volume of local production for food security and exports.

Often, third and fourth class municipalities fail to give the transportation allowances on time, Rodriguez said.

The complainants, he said, should be able to distinguish between the LGU-shouldered allowance and the incentive that the regional DA office provides.

The DA gives a P2,000 monthly perk to those whose programs show good results. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Court won't stop sale of dam by LGUs

BAYOMBONG, Nueva Vizcaya—A judge here denied a petition to stop the impending sale by the provincial government of a foreign-owned hydroelectric power plant in Alfonso Castañeda town, about 150 km from here.

Judge Jose Godofredo Naui, executive judge of the province's south regional trial court district, set aside the plea of California Energy-Casecnan Water and Energy Co. (CE-CWEC), to prevent the July 26 auction of 14 pieces of property within the Casecnan multi-purpose irrigation and power project (CMIPP).

The decision was dated July 19 but was released only on Thursday.

Naui said the CE-CWEC failed to prove that it had a clear right to seek protection from the courts to stop the planned sale.

"Judicial relief [such as a temporary restraining order or TRO] may be given only when the applicant has shown a clear and positive right calling for judicial protection," he said, quoting a Supreme Court decision.

The INQUIRER tried but failed to contact lawyer Linda Castillo, CE-CWEC vice president for corporate and legal affairs. She did not answer calls on her mobile phone.

The CE-CWEC on Tuesday filed a suit for the issuance of an injunction and TRO to stop the provincial government from proceeding with the scheduled public auction of the CMIPP properties.

The auction is part of the local government's effort to levy 14 pieces of CMIPP property to collect the firm's unpaid taxes amounting to P250.7 million. *Melvin Gascon and Ben Moses Ebreo, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

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National Book Development Plan and NBDB Investment Program (2005-2010): The Philippines as a publishing hub in Asia
Competiveness in the book publishing industry: Textbook Review Service, NBDB Quality Seal, NBDB Awards, Training for Textbook Authors
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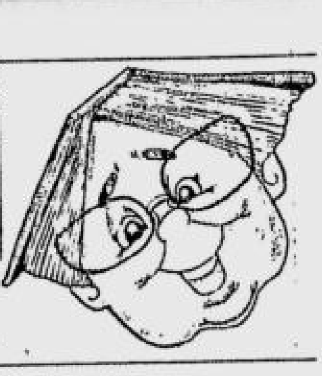
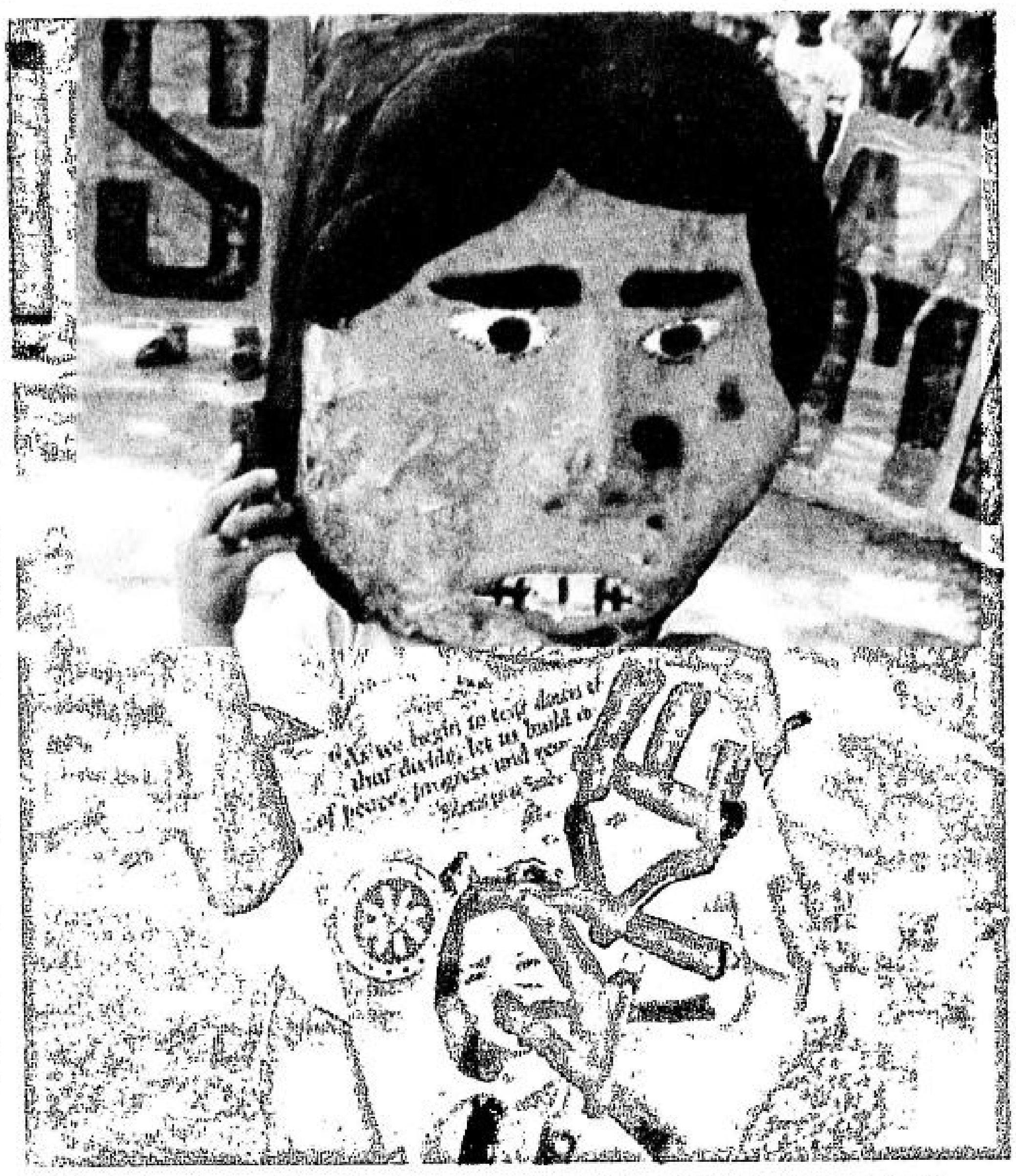


Anti-Sona protests spread outside Metro Manila

A BOY brought to a rally in Baguio City by his parents appear everything but enjoying the protests. TOOTS SOBERANO/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU



A POOR attempt at mask making surfaces in Isabela province where a small group also rallied. BEN MOSES EBREO/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

A BIGGER protest rally is held in Davao City, where militants gathered more individuals and made louder noise. BING GONZALES/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

ARTISTS try to make their presence felt in the Davao City rally. BING GONZALES/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

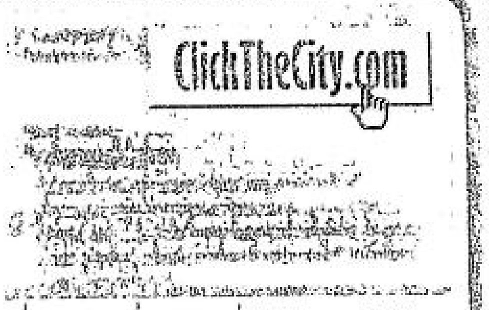
DIFFERENT effigies turn up at the Davao City rally, competing for attention. BING GONZALES/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

EARLIER in the day, police and military officers in Davao City put on happy faces in a show of unity for peace and order. BING GONZALES/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER TV GUIDE

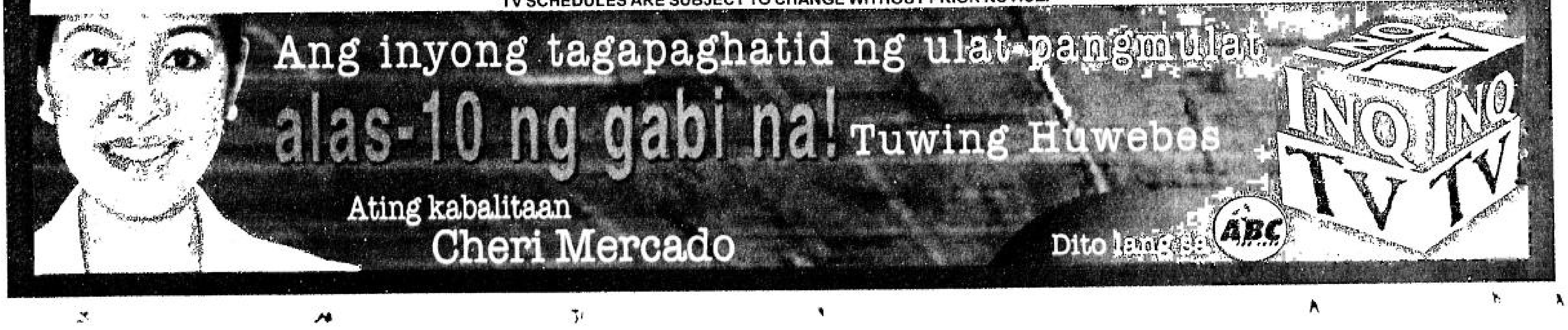
Tuesday, July 26, 2005

Laura Jean
club tv
Saturday_8pm
feel_the_vibe
ABC



Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
NBN						Teledyaryo	Tinig ng Bayan (Live)					Teledyaryo		Tinig ng Bayan (Live)					
ABS-CBN 2	Kapamilya Cinema				Pasion de Amor	Mr. Bean	Naruto	Qpids	Meteor Garden Season 2	TV Patrol World	Mga Anghel Na Walang Langit	Ikaw Ang Lahat Sa Akin	Kampanerang Kuba	Green Rose	Oh! Feel Young	Bora			Insider
ABC 5			EZ Shop		World Pool Championship (Day 3 Session1)				Sentro	Strange But True	ABC Action Movies (Iyo ang Tondo Akin Ang Cavite)				Big News	The Probe Team Documentaries		ESPN Golf: Canadian Women's Open	
GMA 7	Saang Sulok Ng Langit	Now and Forever	Glass Shoes	Tenjho Tenge	Shaman King	Full Metal Alchemist	Full House	24 Oras		Extra Challenge		Darna	Encantadia	Sugo	Attic Cat	Bahay Mo Ba 'To?			Saksi
RPN 9		Metro TV Shopping	Defenders Of The Earth	Hey Arnold!	As Told By Ginger	Wild Thornberrys	Sponge Bob	Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	Ambush Makeover		Medium		Cold Case		Newswatch Now	Up Close And Personal		
IBC 13		EZ Shop		EZ Shop		Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	Pangarap Kong Jackpot		MTV		Basketball Show		TM Phil 9-Ball		Nuts	IBC News Tonite	MTV	
SBN 21		New Life TV Shop		New Life TV Shop				EZ Shop				Oras Ng Himala		Oras ng Katotohanan		Superfine Tv Shopping		Buhay Pinoy	
Studio 23								Get Backers	Beyblade	Wazzup Wazzup	The Rebel Billionaire	Angel		Smallville		News Central	Oprah		The Men's Room
MTV Philippines	MTV Screen	Wildboyz # 104	MTV Get Spotted		Laguna Beach # 104	Hangin Out at MTV		TRL		MTV Play		MTV Divas		One Bad Trip # 102	Newlyweds # 301	Advance Warning # 109	Handpicked: Parokya ni Edgar	MTV Play	VH1 Video Collections
MYX	Star MYX	Urban MYX	Rock MYX	OPM MYX	My MYX	Take 5	MYX Backtrax	MYX Firsts	Mellow MYX	Pop MYX	Urban MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		Top Of The Pops	Mobile MYX Top Picks	My MYX	OPM MYX	MYX Backtrax	Mellow MYX
CNN		Business International		Larry King Live		World News	World Sport	Business International		World News	World Sport	World News Asia		World News	World Sport	World News Asia		Your World Today	
ESPN				LPGA Golf				X Games Invitational		2005 WPBA Cuetec Cues Southeast Classic		Sportscenter Asia	Golf Programming Battle at the Bridges '05						Sportscenter Asia
Solar Sports					Swatch Fivb '05: Women's Final		IBF Malaysian Open '05						Sports Desk	WTA '05 Ladies German Open Berlin SFinal				Rocky Mountain Revue	
Sports Plus			Inside the PGA	B.C. Open highlights		World's Greatest Auto Shows		Raceworld		Porsche Round 7	The Search TV	French Open Highlights				Tour De France			
Cinemax	The Crossing			Among Thieves			Jagged Edge				Crossworlds			Two Weeks Notice			Keeper Of The City (10:40PM)		
Hallmark Channel	Who's The Boss	Regenesis		HCA The Fairytaler	Sesame Street		Mad About You	Bewitched	The Nanny	Sue Thomas: F.B Eye		Regenesis		Boyfriend For Christmas			Agency II (10:35PM)		Sue Thomas: F.B Eye
Disney Channel	Mr. Bean, The Animated Series	Totally Spies	Art Attack/Untalkative Bunny	So Little Time	Buzz Lightyear Of Star Command	Martin Mystery	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr. Bean, The Animated Series	House Of Mouse	Land Before Time II: The Time Of The Great Giving		Sabrina, The Animated Series	Mickey Mouse and Friends	Chip N Dale's Rescue Rangers	Land Before Time IV: Journey Through The Mists			
Discovery Channel		What The Ancients Knew		Rivals		The Ultimate Guide		Tribal Odyssey		Rides		Human Discovery		Wild Discovery		Great Quakes		Science Mysteries	
National Geographic		Air Crash Investigation		The Mafia		Royal Mummy		Wildlife Detectives	Hayden Turner's Wildlife Challenge	Wow! Dog/God		About Asia		National Geographic Specials		Air Crash Investigation		The Mafia	
Cartoon Network	Scooby-Doo Show	The All New Popeye Show		Tom & Jerry Show	The Woody Woodpecker Show	X-Men Evolution	Static Shock	Codename Kids Next Door	Duck Dodgers	SD Gundam Force	Medabots	The Looney Tunes Show		The Powerpuff Girls	Johnny Bravo	Time Squad	Thundercats	Codename Kids Next Door	Duck Dodgers
Nickelodeon	Blues Clues	Rugrats	The Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	All That	Are You Afraid of the Dark?	100 Deeds of Eddie McDowd	The Amanda Show	The Adventures Jimmy Neutron	Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	As Told By Ginger	Yakkity Yak	Chalkzone	Rocket Power	Hey Arnold!	The Wild Thornberrys	The Angry Beavers	Rugrats
Lifestyle Network	Secret Gardens	The Fix	Mission Organization	Carol Duvall	Molto Mario	Hot Off The Grill	Good Eats	Extreme Cuisine	Unwrapped	Passion For Dessert	Second Look		Look For Less	Life & Style		E! True Hollywood Story		Road & Track	Back To Basics
Star World	Frasier	The Bold & The Beautiful		Hollywood Squares	Home Improvement	Buffy The Vampire Slayer		The Simpsons	The Drew Carey Show	Star News Asia	Friends	Ed		Desperate Housewives		The Amazing Race 6		Friends	Ed
AXN		CSI: Miami		CSI: Miami		Record Setters		PSI Factor (Season III)		Beastmaster		Ripley's Believe It or Not		CSI: NY (Season I)				WRC 2005: Argentina	
JackTV	Just For Laughs	Just For Laughs	Hip Hop Nation	WWE Bottomline		WWE Afterburn		X-Play	Banzai	Mad TV		Trigger Happy TV	Primetime Glick	South Park	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	Stripperella	Family Guy	Wwe Heat	
ETC		Good Morning Miami	Knock First	Blind Date	Fifth Wheel	Elimidate	Change of Heart	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	JKX	Simple Life	One Tree Hill		Who Wants To Marry My Dad		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	
HBO		High Risk			Almost A Woman			Legends of the Fall (6:15PM)					Head Of State (8:25PM)			Normal		Chain Reaction (10:50PM)	
Star Movies			Species (3:25PM)			Good Morning Vietnam				Father Of The Bride Part II				Bringing Down The House					
Cinema One		Kandidatong Pulpol				Hiling				Anngkung King		Daddy-O, Baby-O				Anghel Sa Lupa			
EWTN	Angels Of God	Angelus (3:15PM)	Saints For The Third Millenium St. Therese Of Lisieux	Faith Factory B	Angel Force	Rosary With Mother Angelica	EWTN Gallery	Pope John Paul's Legacy To The Family	Pope Pius XII	The Journey Home		Daily Mass Live		Angelus (9:15PM)	Swear To God	The Sacraments Through The Ages	St. Catherine Of Sienna	Web Of Faith	

TV SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.


Ang inyong tagapaghatid ng ulat-pangmulat
alas-10 ng gabi na! Tuwing Huwebes
Ating kabalitaan
Cheri Mercado
Dito lang sa ABC
INQ TV

People outside Metro speak

AS PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo prepared to report to the people in her first State of the Nation Address since her now questioned victory in the presidential elections of 2004, the INQUIRER sought out men and women in Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao, who would be otherwise going about day-to-day business, for their opinions.

Some shared the anger and frustration of Ms Arroyo's critics, others sympathized with her while still some couldn't care less.

Here are their views.

"She mentioned a lot of good things but she failed to give hope to the lowly government employees." **–Victor Pinero,** *56, government employee in Negros Oriental*

"(Her speech is) nothing but scripted from the previous Sonas. It (Ms Arroyo's promises) will never materialize." **–Joel Capundan,** *lechon manok operator. in Roxas City, Capiz*

"*Wala kami labot kun ano man nawakal niya* (We don't care whatever she is saying). We are tired of her promises." **–Purificacion Borja,** *street vendor at the Roxas City public market*

"She's applauded for her self-proclaimed achievements, but what is there to be happy about? Jeepney fare is still high and food is still expensive. Systemic change is needed." **–Agnes Españo Dimzon,** *40, NGO worker, Iloilo City*

"The longer she stays in power, the more she becomes a Ramos girl. She is now in favor of Charter change and a shift to parliamentary form of government." **–A young lawyer who asked not to be identified,** *Iloilo City*

"She did not touch the questions on her leadership. Her allies applauded her but there were many protesters outside (the Batasan Complex)." **–Leticia,** *68, retired teacher, La Paz, Iloilo City*

"I liked her speech. I think despite of everything, she should be given a chance to continue the reforms she started because she might succeed." **–Henry Garferio,** *37, janitor, Bacolod City*

"I hope the changes President Gloria Arroyo want will solve our problems." **–Manuel Cadavero,** *54, carpenter from Southern Leyte*

"*Waray ko naintindihan* (I did not understand anything)" **–Lolita Ditchon,** *63, housewife, Tacloban City, Leyte*

"I watched her deliver her State of the Nation Address. But I feel she is not again sincere on what she was saying. And she did not mention (anything) about the (Garci) tape. I was disappointed." **–Ma. Delia Arintok,** *government employee, Tacloban City, Leyte*

"I waited almost a day but (her speech) was over in 23 minutes. I wish everyone will have a job with her economic reforms." **–Neneng Carbonilla,** *45, dressmaker in Southern Leyte*

"*Wala akong pakialam.* Her statements have no impact in our lives. It can't solve our problem which is poverty." **–Rosita Reyes,** *65, scavenger/food vendor in Cebu City*

"Bravo to the President. She really has the vision, she has the direction in governing the country. I could not understand why other people wanted to oust her." **–Rosa Caparida,** *stall-owner in Cebu City*

"Praise the Lord. She was really enlightened by the Holy Spirit when she delivered the Sona. I even stood up and clapped my hands because of too much admiration for her speech." **–Teresita Esparcia,** *47, owner of an eatery in Cebu City*

"*Iyong damit lang ni* Gloria *ang maganda, iyong* Sona *hindi.* It seemed that she was the only one who would benefit from [the promises she made in her] Sona. It was all about promises, all about *pagpapaganda* (cosmetics). She never discussed the issues against her, like election fraud." **–Jun Tacderas,** *58, electrical engineer, Benguet Electric Cooperative, Baguio City*

"President Macapagal-Arroyo's Sona was just like an ordinary speech of an ordinary politician calling for unity and promising better future, which are both difficult to achieve. Just like last year, she again mentioned Charter change and the shift to parliamentary [form of government]. But she did not mention a timetable for these." **–Joselito Fausto,** *local government employee, Angeles City*

"GMA defused the political tension in the country. *Hindi siya nagsalita ng masama o laban sa mga nasa oposisyon... Kahanga-hanga ang sinabi niya na* 'at all cost' ready *siyang itaguyod ang mabuting gobyerno at pamamahala ng bansa.*" **–Fortunato Dionisio,** *50, driver, Bulacan, Bulacan*

"A change in the political system is not the answer to our problems. What we need is a change in the character among our political leaders. Those working in government must start re-orienting themselves about what public service is all about so that our country will move forward." **–Mar Guieb,** *employee, Ilocos Norte provincial government*

"It was arguably the most applauded Sona but it was just a show of force of her invited supporters. There was not much meat [in her speech], especially those concerning poor Filipinos." **–Jojo de Guzman,** *president, Nueva Ecija Press Club, Cabanatuan City*

"GMA did not address the issues being hurled at her, like 'jueteng' and wiretapping [controversy]. She merely mentioned some accomplishments but did not discuss the true state of the nation. She dangled the constituent assembly to stop the opposition from attacking her and to sideline the impeachment issue." **–Laddie Andaya,** *housewife, Calasiao, Pangasinan*

"The people know the truth." **–Reginald Ugaddan,** *Bayan-Cagayan Valley spokesperson, Ilagan, Isabela*

"Her Sona contained political tricks to appease the growing voice of dissent. There were no solutions offered to the problems of our sagging economy." **–Arnold Ben,** *manager, cable television service firm, Science City of Muñoz, Nueva Ecija*

"It is sidestepping the issue when she talked about Charter change and parliamentary system. It's squid tactics that distracts us from the real issues. When she said that politics has degenerated, what was her role in the degeneration? There are more important topics of the day. When she mentioned that the economy is [ready to] take off, we all know it is on a nosedive." **–Gina Alvarez,** *lawyer, Baguio City*

"I do not believe in anything that GMA said. If it is true that her administration had done something for the ordinary Filipino, then why are we even poorer than we used to? Only the rich benefit from the kind of reforms that her government is doing. Even the expanded value added tax is another useless reform because, as we all know, taxes only go to the pockets of politicians. Life in this country is frustrating." **–Belen Ballesteros,** *41, meat vendor, Calasiao, Pangasinan*

"As expected what she said was part of a grand plan to deceive the people of what really is happening. It was never an answer to the clamor of the people who have been calling for her resignation or ouster," **–lawyer Carlos Isagani-Zarate,** *convenor of the Union of People's Lawyers in Mindanao*

"She (President) did well in her delivery. We congratulate her. Though Malaysia postponed the peace talks, we are ready and we are working out the 20 percent." **–Eid Kabalu,** *MILF spokesperson*

"It's good that she (President Arroyo) endorsed Charter change. Now, the MNLF can pursue amendments of RA 9054 (the law that created the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao)." **–Muslimin Sema,** *MNLF secretary general and mayor of Cotabato City*

"Parliamentary and federal system, what's that? President Arroyo can call for any change of government, it's up to her. But if she really loves the country, she should step down now. With all those big rallies against her administration, it is obvious that the people are now fed up. They don't want her to lead the country anymore." **–Fe Fernandez,** *entrepreneur, Lucena City*

"President Arroyo's Sona was made up of patriotic words but devoid of substance and meaning in the face of the present realities of hard living. I expect no change, no improvement in the plight of common Filipinos. Oil price hikes will continue, the cost of food in the market will remain high while the basic salary will still remain low. Protest rallies will continue, that's for sure." **–Ronnie Romero,** *chicharon vendor, Lucena City*

"*Pinili nya ang* popular issues *kaya maraming palpak. Pero* she did not discuss *kung ano ang kinabukasan ng mahihirap at kung ano talaga ang problema.* On the 4 million jobs, we cannot take that on face value." **–Prof. Oscar Evangelista,** *former UP Dean of Student Affairs and Palawan Community Media Council chair*

"Nothing's new, it's just a mere recycled piece of a State of a Nation Address that I've heard since she assumed the presidency. But I'm impressed that she did not mention about resigning from her office." **–Gilbert Baloloy,** *part-time professor, Aquinas University*

"Welcome *ang* pronouncement *ng* parliamentary form of government because it will give importance to the local government units and (it will be) less costly in electing officials. But the question is, 'Is it doable at this time because of impeachment and and financial constraints?" **–Marcial Tuanqui,** *director of Albay Chamber of Commerce and Industry and former vice president and board member of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry*

"Let us support the President's program of action so that the people can move forward to ensure better life and maintain the economic progress in the future." **–retired PNP Bicol regional director Restituto Mosqueda**

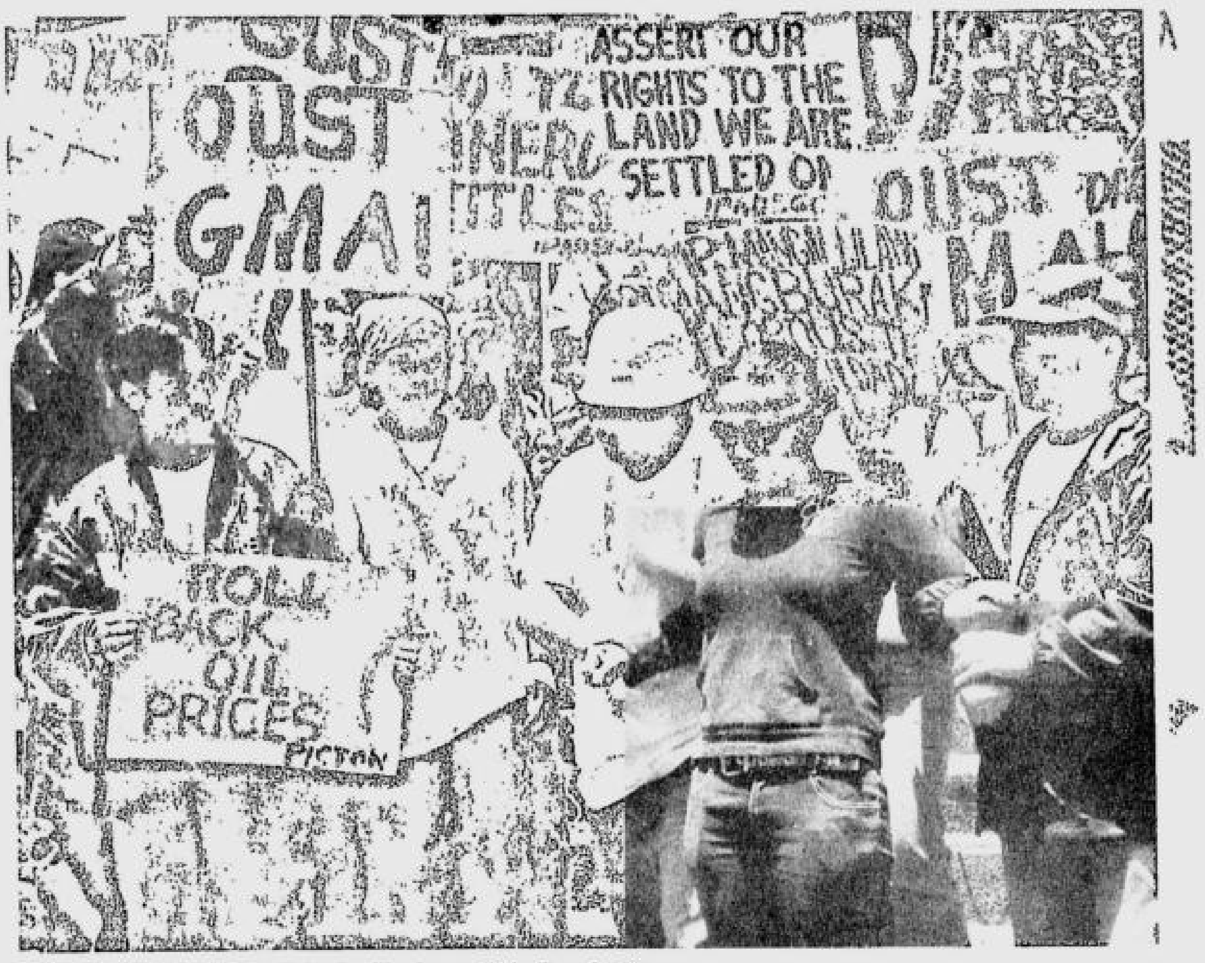
"The fact alone that Sona has come to pass without accompanying political upheaval, such facts should act as a wake-up call to the opposition that unless it is united and stick with one voice, GMA will finish her term. It should not, however, make GMA confident that the opposition will not recover from its discordant state because should it learn from its lessons, it can resurrect and push for GMA's eventual removal from power." **–lawyer Salvador Panelo,** *legal counsel of retired Chief Supt. Restituto Mosqueda*

"*Hindi totoo ang mga sinasabi nya. Marami pa rin ang walang trabaho. Ang dapat ay mag-*resign *na sya.* As expected she had again all the promises! In short, she was just aiming for a solution that for me can create another problem. She is favoring more on Cha-cha, which is uncalled for these days." **–Shondell Lajato,** *professor, Palawan State University*

"Her Sona performance is good but far from her performance as political leader. Cha-cha may be good but her timing is bad." **–Norman Novia,** *church worker in San Jose, Occidental, Mindoro*

"I am not satisfied. She did not answer the bone of contention in the minds of the people. It is very short *kaya bitin!* Considering the effort for the preparation for the occasion." **–Lucile Bacay,** *teacher, Roxas, Oriental Mindoro*

Delfin T. Mallari Jr., Jofelle P. Tesorio, Michael B. Jaucian, Madonna T. Virola, Romulo O. Ponte and Gil Francis Arevalo, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau; Desiree Caluza, Villamor Visaya Jr., Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, Eric Montoya, Frank Cimatu and Cristina Arzadon, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau, and Jun Malig, Carmela Reyes and Anselmo Roque, PDI Central Luzon Desk; Carla P. Gomez, Ma. Diosa Labiste, Felipe Celino, Alex V. Pal, Joey A. Gabieta, Jhunnex Napallacan and Jani Arnaiz, PDI Visayas Bureau and PDI Mindanao Bureau


OUST GMA!
ASSERT OUR RIGHTS TO THE LAND WE ARE SETTLED ON
OUST
ROLL BACK OIL PRICES

MILITANTS drag a Gloria look-alike in a rally in Baguio City.

TOOTS SOBERANO/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

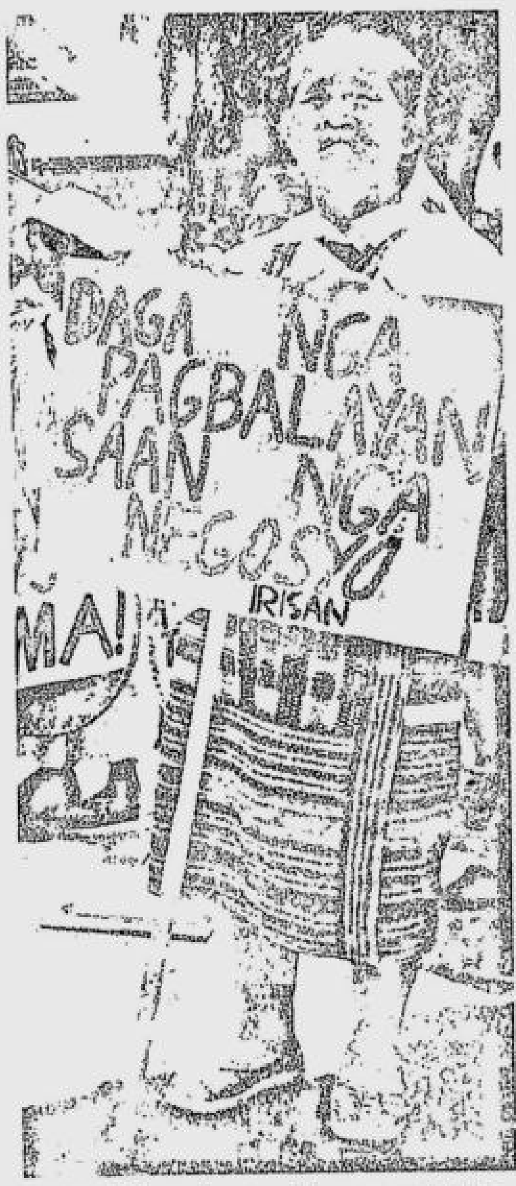
EFFIGY-making was the fad in the Davao City rally.

BING GONZALES/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

OUST GMA
SARDENG TI DEMOLISYON TI SIDE WALK VENDORS!

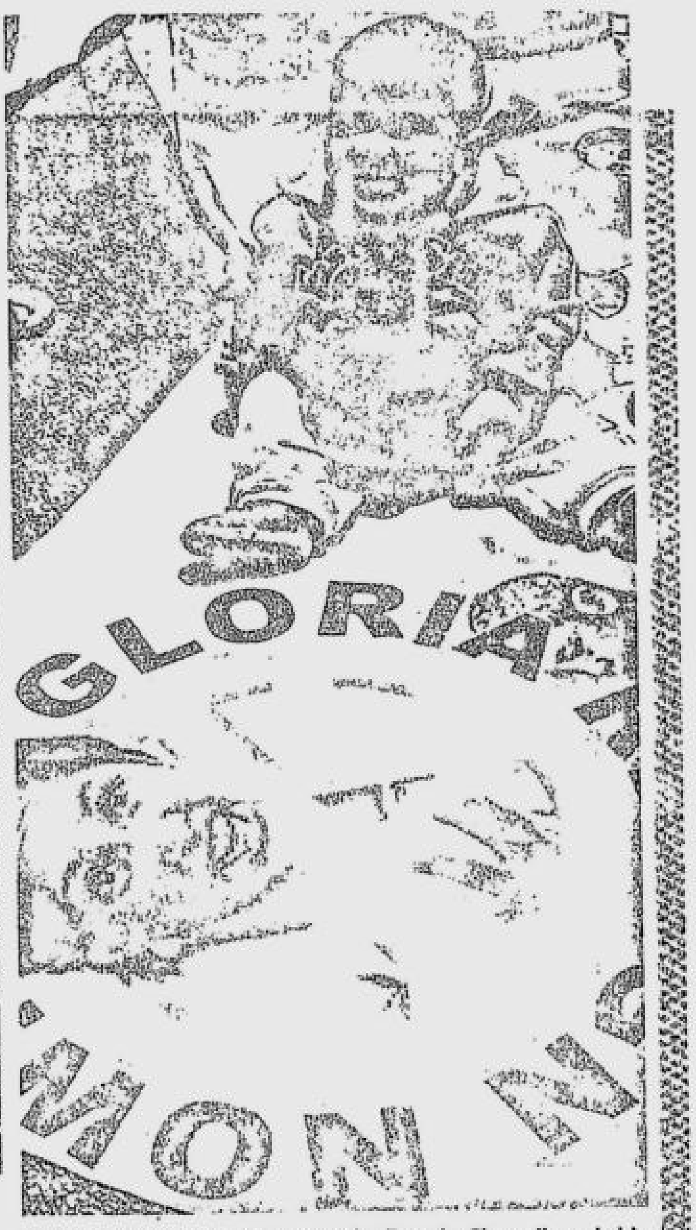
VENDORS say their piece in the Baguio City rally.

TOOTS SOBERANO/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU


DAGA NGA PAGBALAYAN SAAN NGA NEGOSYO
IRISAN

A WOMAN vendor stands her ground at the Baguio City rally.

TOOTS SOBERANO/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU



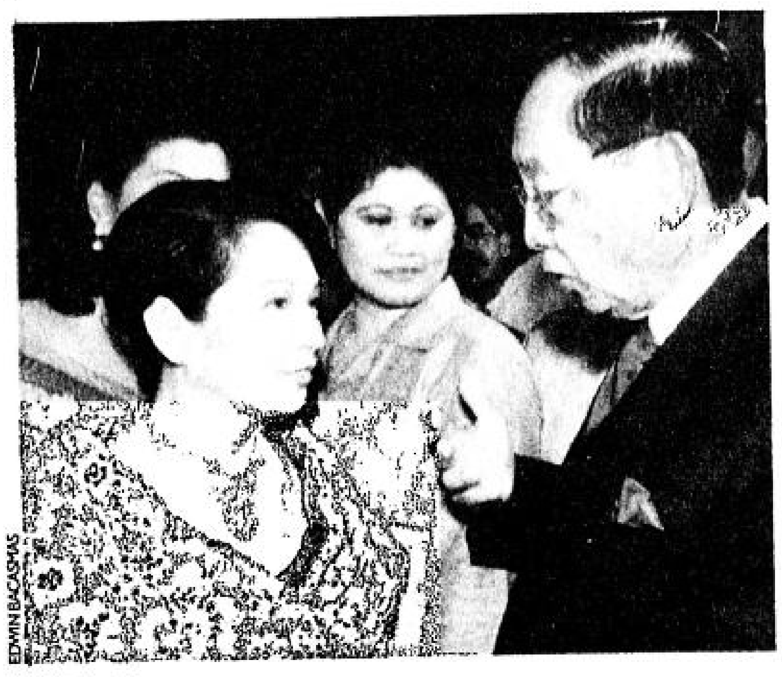
WHATEVER a baby is doing in the Baguio City rally, only his parents could answer.

TOOTS SOBERANO/PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

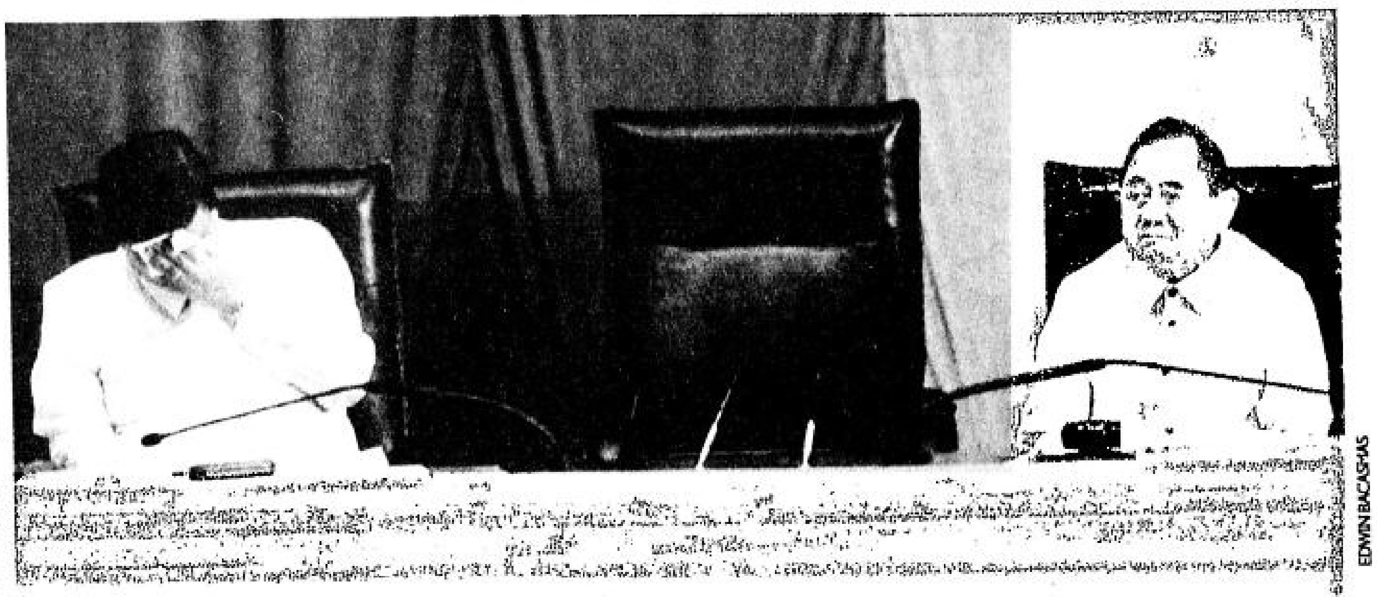
PROTESTERS couldn't get past guards blocking their way in Cebu City.

CDN PHOTO

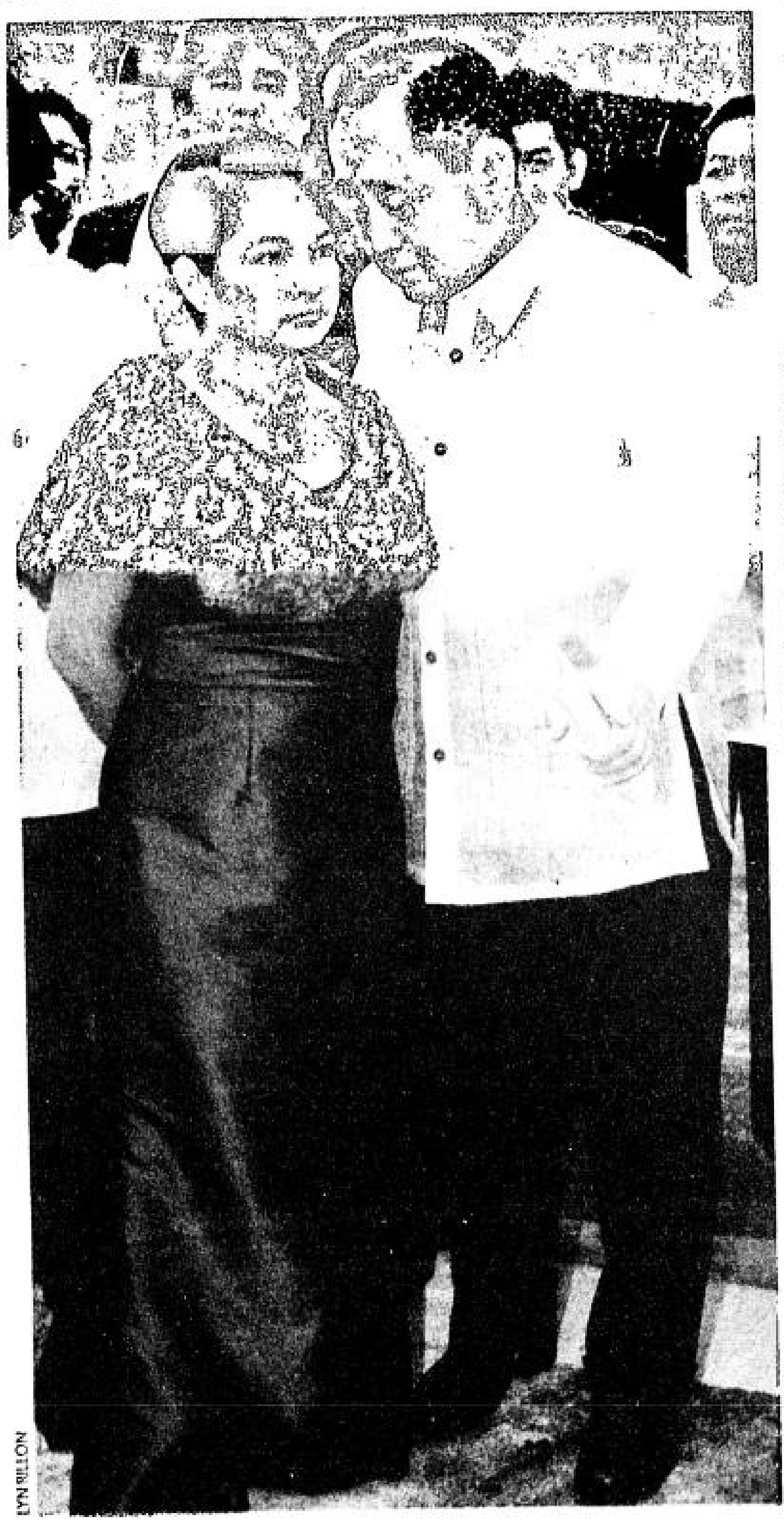
THE DAY OF THE SONA


EDWIN BACASMAS

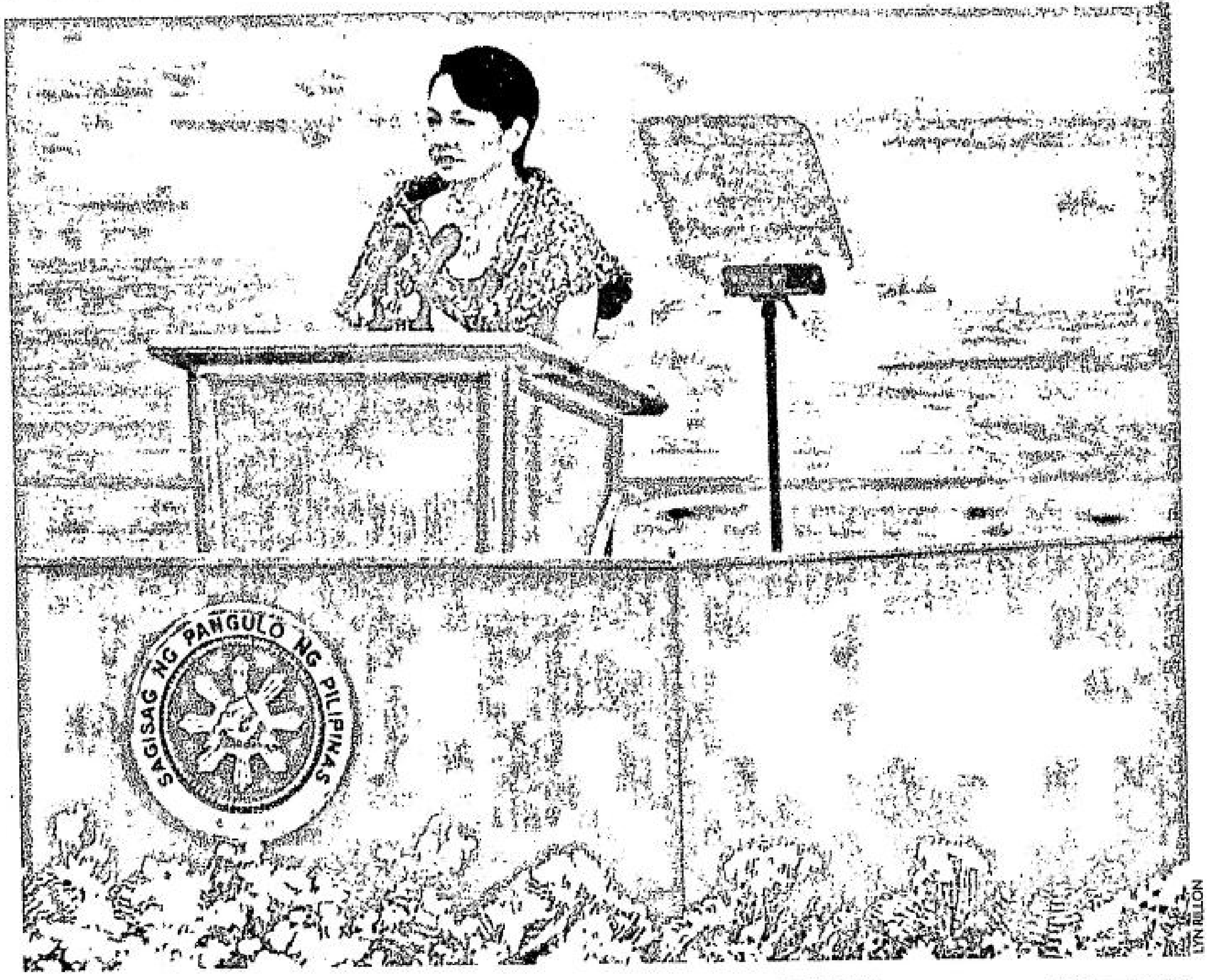
LISTENING to her elder. President Arroyo chatty, chummy with former President Ramos after her Sona.


EDWIN BACASMAS

(RIGHT) FOR CRYING OUT LOUD. Senate President Franklin Drilon appears to be overcome by some emotion while De Venecia makes like a toughie. This is going on behind the President's back (below).


LYN RILLON

(LEFT) The Perfect host to the President, House Speaker Jose de Venecia gets the President's ear as well as her commendation for initiating an inter-faith conference at the United Nations.


SAGISAG NG PANGULO NG PILIPINAS
LYN RILLON

EDWIN BACASMAS

DELIGHTING in the pleasure of their company, Ms Arroyo doesn't mind being mobbed by an admiring throng after delivering her Sona.

EDWIN BACASMAS

SOUR NOTE: Rep. Manuel "Way Kurat" Zamora, who owns a plant nursery near the Batasang Pambansa, distributes calamansi seedlings to his colleagues, the meaning of which was still unclear at press time.

LYN RILLON

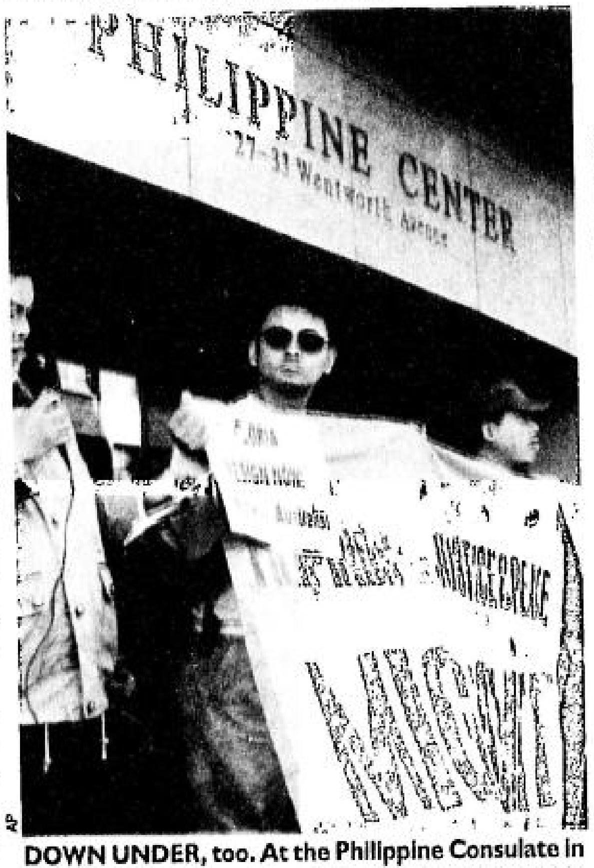
TALKING STILL. No matter the differences, party-list Representatives Teddy Casiño and Satur Ocampo take it from their Speaker—with a smile.

JESS YUSON

THE SENATE opens on Monday morning the second regular session of the 13th Congress with the National Anthem. From left are Senators Alfredo Lim, Jamby Madrigal and Panfilo Lacson.

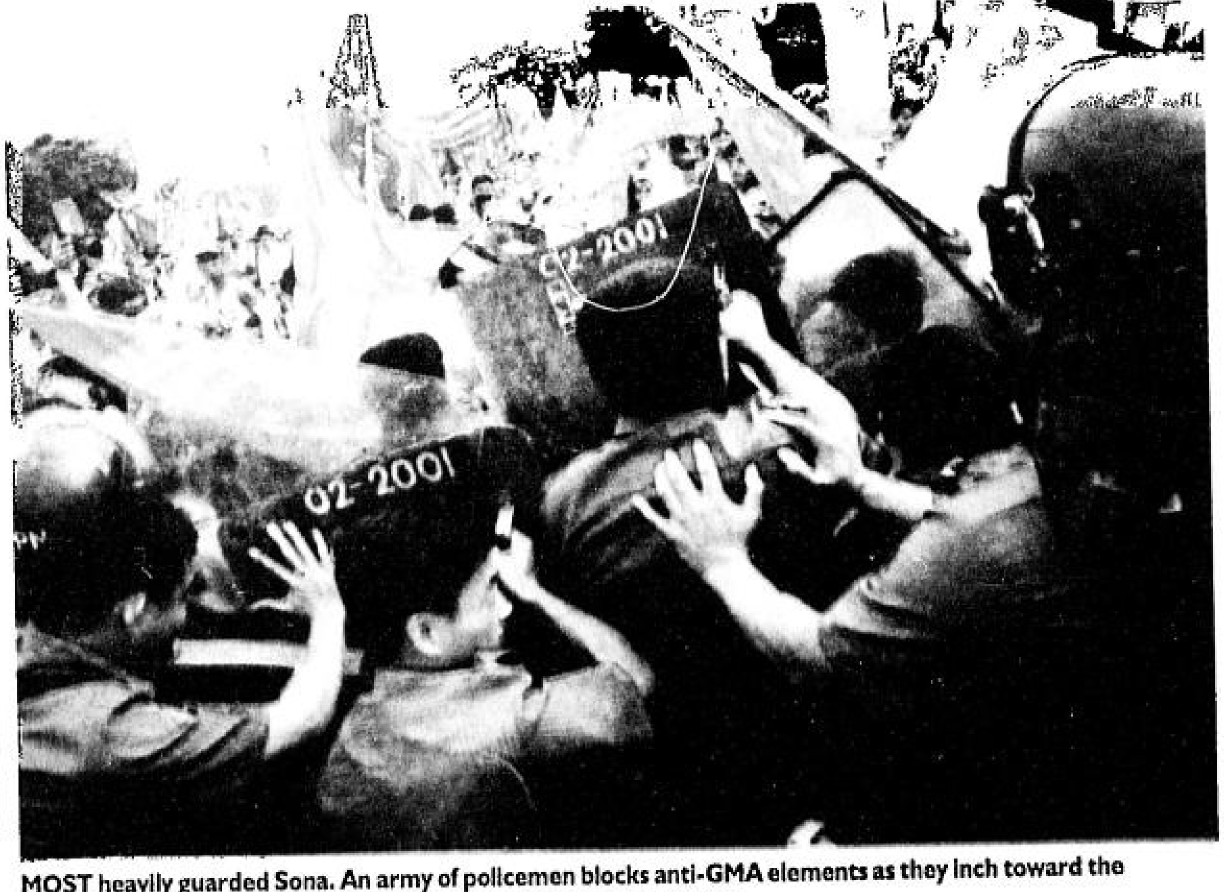
REM ZAMORA

PINNING hopes on making a little on the side to fund protest rallies.



AP

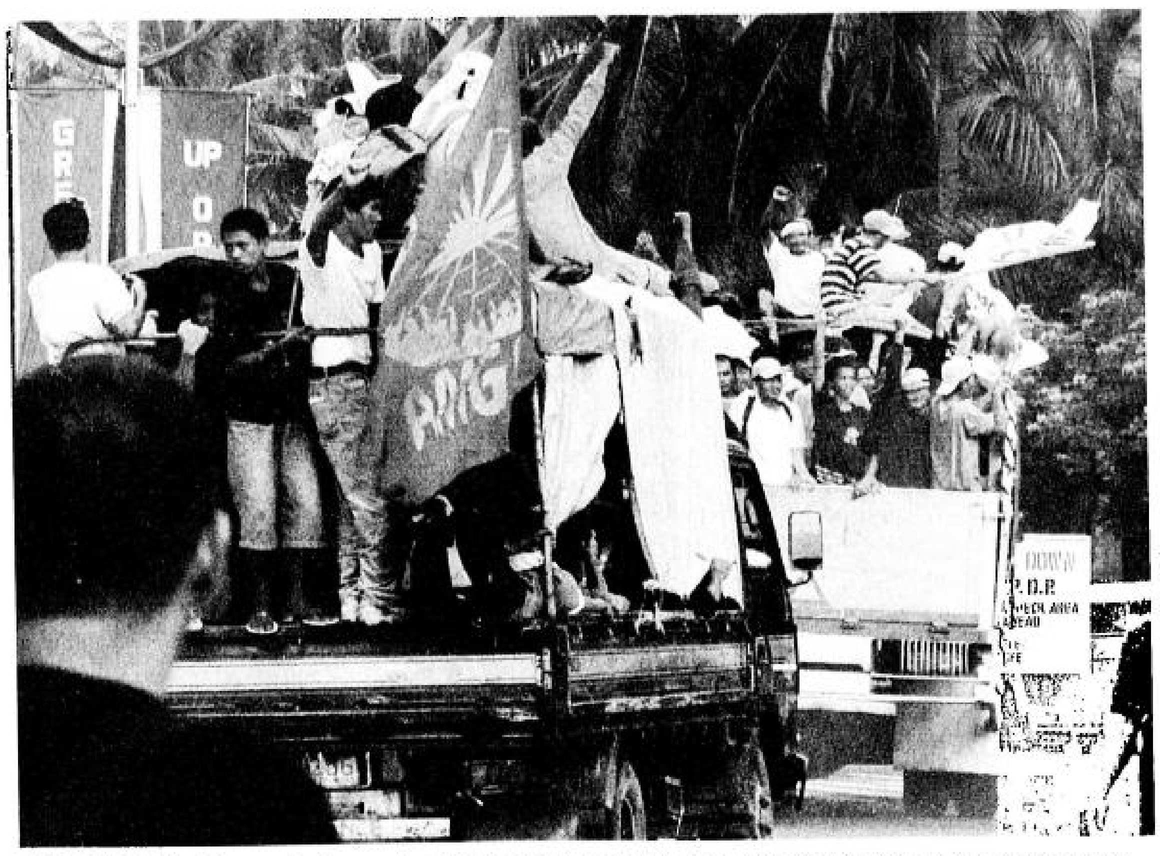
DOWN UNDER, too. At the Philippine Consulate in Sydney, Australia, on Monday, protesters call for Ms Arroyo's resignation.



REM ZAMORA

MOST heavily guarded Sona. An army of policemen blocks anti-GMA elements as they inch toward the Sandiganbayan building, which is closer to the Batasang Pambansa.

JUST IN TIME for Sona, this protest rally is held before the Cebu provincial capitol. ALNOE PALER/CDN



TRUCKLOADS of demonstrators arrive at the rally site on Commonwealth Avenue, at least 500 meters away from the Sandiganbayan, which would have been closer—but not quite—to the object of their protest. RAFFY LERMA

Opposition mounts biggest rally yet

From page A1

denied manipulating the ballot.

"This is the biggest Sona rally I have ever seen," Boy, 47, who has been living beside the Ever Gotesco Mall for five years, told the INQUIRER. He used old green binoculars he borrowed from a neighbor just to see the rear of the rally. He did not see it.

The protesters filled up the northbound side of the main thoroughfare leading to the House of Representatives from the Capitol Estates Subdivision beside Ever Gotesco to as far back as Our Lord's Grace Montessori.

All major roads leading to the building were blocked and traffic rerouted. Security of the House was reinforced with steel containers, concrete blocks and barbed wire.

The protesters were a mix of left-wing groups and supporters of deposed President Joseph Estrada and the late actor Fernando Poe Jr., Ms Arroyo's closest rival in the presidential election.

Crowds isolated

"There were actually two anti-Arroyo demonstrations—the huge rally organized by the militant Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) and the United Opposition from the mall to the Montessori and the smaller gathering by the umbrella organization Laban ng Masa in front of the subdivision.

The first group of the Laban ng Masa reached about 5,000 just before Ms Arroyo delivered her Sona.

The two rallies were separated by a 20-meter space under the overpass in front of the mall, each of them parking their sound trucks and vans across the road to isolate their crowds.

A third rally was mounted by about 8,000 supporters of Ms Arroyo at the Commission on Audit building, more than 700 meters away from the protesters.

Despite the suspension of classes, an estimated 11,000 students and teachers from different public schools, colleges and universities joined the protest.

The Youth Demanding for Arroyo's Resignation (Youth-Dare) said some 10,000 students from the University of the Philippines, Polytechnic University of the Philippines, Ateneo, La Salle, University of Santo Tomas, University of the East, Adamson University, Trinity College and other schools, as well as other youth groups, joined the protest.

Street classes

The students huddled in "street classes" to discuss the "real state of the nation."

At the rally, a taped song blared from speakers mounted on trucks: "Fake president, your days are numbered." On one truck, activists put up a mosaic picture of Ms Arroyo with a presidential seal, saying "Fake president of the Philippines."

Five party-list representatives allied with Laban ng Masa left the House of Representatives to join the rally by noon.

Anak Mindanao party-list Rep. Mujiv Hataman led the crowd in chanting "*Patalsikin si Gloria* (Oust Gloria)."

He said his group went out of the Batasang Pambansa even before the joint session of Congress began because "we don't want to listen to Ms Arroyo's lies."

Akbayan party-list Rep. Rissa Hontiveros also went up the makeshift stage wearing her white Filipiniana gown. She said she came to the rally to hear the real Sona, the situation of the poor.

The Laban ng Masa, which claims to consist of more than 90 organizations, is pressing for a "transitional revolutionary council." Big streamers at the rally read: "Baguhin Elitistang Sistema (Change the elitist system)."

The group is not satisfied with only the ouster of Ms Arroyo, said Francisco "Dodong" Nemenzo Jr., chair of the group and former University of the Philippines president.

"We are pushing for a transitional revolutionary council [to be composed of] representations from major organizations that brought down the regime of Ms Arroyo," he said.

The council will, in the meantime, "set aside provisions of the Constitution to make it possible to institute social reforms." He said that before having an election, "there must be some fundamental reforms."

Tension

Tension rose when his group ran wild and started hurling stones at the policemen at about 2:30 p.m. Minutes later, several protesters started pushing the three lines of policemen blocking the group.

Policemen slowly moved back as the protesters pressed forward inch by inch, their voices growing louder and louder. Gaining momentum, the protesters walked past the Our Lady of Mercy School. Many cars parked in front were soon sandwiched by the crowd.

The policemen relented. They allowed the protesters to walk near the parish, reaching the barbed-wire barricades the police had set up across the road.

But when the protesters reached the barricade, they started dismantling the wires. Some of them pushed the concrete traffic blocks as they yelled at the policemen. *With reports from Alcuin Papa and DJ Yap*

PNP brass band eases tension at the barricades

By Volt Contreras

AS THE barricades hold, a brass band plays on.

Complete with musicians taking care of troop morale, the Philippine National Police clogged the road leading to the Batasang Pambansa with container vans, dump trucks, fire engines, barbed wire fences and concrete barriers to keep protesters at bay during President Macapagal-Arroyo's fifth and perhaps most watched State of the Nation Address.

Veteran street marchers said yesterday's blockade put up by the PNP reminded them of the security cordon around the legislative building during the October 2003 state visit of US President George W. Bush.

"I've been marching in Sonas since 1987 and I don't remember them (police) using container vans before," said Bayan Muna Rep. Teodoro Casiño.

For Carl Anthony Ala, spokesperson for the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas, the use of more hardware and police phalanxes showed the "isolation" of the Arroyo presidency.

The barriers effectively limited the advance of anti-Arroyo groups only up to the Ever Gotesco Mall area.

To get any nearer Batasan, the protesters would have to get through a first line of anti-riot police, then a "buffer zone" or empty stretch of road of about 100 meters," three alternating layers of barbed wire and concrete dividers, and another row of seven container vans and two dump trucks.

Behind the vans and trucks waited another line of policemen, and still behind them was about seven fire trucks with their water cannons ready.

But oddly, perhaps the most pacifying team in the police formation was not an anti-riot squad.

Classics

At the makeshift command center headed by Vidal Querol, the National Capital Region Command chief, members of the PNP Band from Camp Crame played familiar classics and contemporary pieces—almost oblivious to the antigovernment protesters massing several meters away.

The band sat in a semicircle at the front terrace of the St. Peter's Parish, where the police earlier drove out leftist protesters from Sanlakas who had camped out on the spot the night before.

"There's music to fill the air so that we will not have a hostile atmosphere," Querol said.

"The band was there to soothe the nerves of the [protesters] and the police. We want to start the event smiling, and we did smile a lot," Querol said.

He said the PNP's two objectives were met. "To allow the President to fulfill her duty and deliver the Sona and to allow protesters to express their opinion and disperse them in a peaceful way."

Querol said the President "commended the PNP for a job well done."

He noted that this was the first time that the PNP came up with such a tactic—which no doubt cannot be found in any crowd-control manual.

And "true enough," the day ended with no major violent incident, he said. There were no reported arrests in connection with the rally, either.

Querol thanked his men for "exercising maximum tolerance" and the rally organizers for being "responsible and sober."

But he made special mention of the band leader and conductor, police officer Eric Hayag.

Up to 6,000 policemen were mobilized to secure Commonwealth Avenue and other roads leading to the Batasan complex. *With reports from Jocelyn R. Uy*

Protest rained out across the nation

From page A1

carrying an air rifle near the rally site.

Caravan to Kalibo

In the capital town of Kalibo in Aklan, 2,000 protesters held a rally near the Pastrana Park.

Members of transport groups brought around 60 tricycles and 25 jeepneys in a caravan from Numancia town to Kalibo.

Around 1,000 protesters marched in the main streets of Roxas City in Capiz before holding a rally at the Plaza Bandstand.

Another 200 led by the Ecumenical Movement for Justice and Peace and priests of the Philippine Independent Church joined the rally in the capital town of San Jose, Antique.

Rain forced protesters to disperse in Bacolod City, Negros Occidental. At least 5,000 members of the Laban ng Masa had gathered for a march but a downpour scuttled them and only 500 made it to the City Hall, police said.

Rain also broke up a march of between 5,000 and 8,000 members of the Negros Movement for Moral Regeneration, but 2,000 of them made it to the plaza.

Transport strikes

A strike called by the Federation of Bacolod City Drivers Associations was barely felt.

The daylong protest by Nagkahiusang Drayber sa Sugbo and Alliance of Transport Organization Members Intra-Cebu City failed to cripple public transportation in Cebu City and Metro Cebu.

Two groups demanding Ms Arroyo's resignation were forced to delay their rally for more than an hour due to the heavy downpour in Cebu City.

Numbering 500 to 700, protesters belonging to the Gloria Step Down Movement (GSM), composed of the Bagong Alyansang Makabayan (Bayan) and its affiliated organizations, paraded from the Fuente Osmeña but police blocked their way to the Capitol ground.

Music blasting from loudspeakers drowned out anti-Arroyo speeches.

Rain delayed the caravan of the Laban Ng Masa, composed of the Akbayan, Sanlakas and the other affiliate groups.

Only 600 protesters made it to Colon Street from where they proceeded to the Malacañang sa Sugbo near the Aduana port, where they burned an Arroyo effigy.

Rain failed to stop 1,000 protesters led by Bayan from marching from Real Street to Quezon Boulevard in Tacloban City, Leyte.

At about 5 p.m., the protesters held a torch parade to Remedios Trinidad Romualdez Park along Justice Romualdez Street, about 500 meters from Quezon Boulevard. There, the group held a cultural program where they expressed their gripes against the administration through short drama presentations and songs.

Some 200 members of the Freedom from Debt Coalition and the Task Force Detainees of the Philippines held separate protest actions in Tacloban.

Gloria Step Down Group

In Davao City, at least 5,000 protesters from North Cotabato and the Davao provinces under the coalition Gloria Step Down Movement (GSM) held a rally at the Rizal Park.

At the Freedom Park, at least a thousand protesters belonging to the Laban ng Masa gathered to also call for the resignation of the President and Vice President Noli de Castro.

In General Santos City, some 700 Bayan militants braved rain to dramatize their protest against a "bogus" President.

In Cagayan de Oro City, several thousand protesters from all over Northern Mindanao gathered at the Divisoria District where they held a rally. At least 500 farmers from Bukidnon joined the rally despite the heavy rains.

In Butuan City, some 4,000 protesters marched around the city's main thoroughfares to demand that Ms Arroyo step aside.

Luzon rallies

Police also reported small protests in San Jose del Monte City in Bulacan and in Candon City in Ilocos Sur. Policemen seized 10 "pill box" bombs from the Bulacan protesters.

Small protests of several hundreds were reported in major cities in Luzon but there were no untoward incidents.

Police stopped 700 farmers from barricading the North Luzon Expressway gates.

Enforcing a no-permit, no-rally policy, some 200 antiriot police blocked the Dolores stretch of the Gapan-San Fernando-Olongapo Road leading to the NLEx and stalled traffic for an hour.

"Clearly, this is a repression of our constitutional rights to assemble and express grievances," said Aurora Broquil, spokesperson of the regional Kilusan para sa Pambansang Demokrasya, as policemen pushed the protesters out of the highway.

Nestor Diego of the Pambansang Katipunan ng mga Samahan sa Kanayunan said the police stopped his contingent from Nueva Ecija and Pangasinan from leaving the Dau gates in Mabalacat, Pampanga.

The provincial contingents of Bayan went through what looked like obstacles courses, according to its Central Luzon chair, Roman Polintan.

Those from Tarlac, Nueva Ecija and Pangasinan were blocked more than three times as they traversed the old MacArthur Highway, Polintan said.

In Baguio City, officials of the party-list group Bayan Muna said Ms Arroyo had effectively distanced herself from the public to account for the real state of the nation.

The rally gathered about 200 members of the Cordillera Peoples Alliance (CPA), Ornus-Kadamay, Kilusang Mayo Uno, Youth Demanding Arroyo's Ouster (Youth-Dare) and the Gays and Lesbians for the Immediate Tsugi of GMA (Galit GMA) at the Igorot Park in Baguio.

Retired and resigned policemen belonging to the United Guardians Party and representatives of the People's Movement Against Poverty also joined the protest.

In Isabela, at least 100 members of militant and farmers groups converged at the Bonifacio Freedom Park in Ilagan town to demand the resignation of Ms Arroyo and De Castro.

In Ilocos Sur, at least 500 members of various groups staged a protest in Candon to call for the ouster of Ms Arroyo.

Another rally organized by student and youth groups was staged in Vigan City.

In Ilocos Norte, some 50 members of militant women's and farmers' group massed up in front of the provincial capitol in Laoag City to call for the resignation of Ms Arroyo.

Quezon protests

A group of militant workers from the Bukluran ng Manggagawang Pilipino in Southern Tagalog held a protest caravan from Candelaria town in Quezon to the capital, Lucena City, aboard 30 vehicles and several motorcycles.

Ronnie Luna, chair of BMP-ST, said the protest was a manifestation that people wanted Ms Arroyo to quit.

Another 500 protesters from the Akbayan party-list group staged a one-minute "die-in" in Candelaria's main street. Motorists joined the protest by blowing their horns.

In Cavite, 500 protesters from the Partido ng Manggagawa and Alyansa ng Mamamayan sa Kabite (Almakab) held a rally and noise barrage.

In San Pablo and Calamba cities in Laguna, trade unionists and urban poor activists took to the streets, bearing placards saying "No to GMA, No to Noli."

In Legazpi City, at least 150 members of Bayan-Bicol and other militant groups had a march-rally from Daraga town to the Pinaglabanan Shrine in the city proper despite the rain.

About 200 protesters belonging to Bayan Muna, Anakpawis and Gabriela participated in a rally in Plaza 15 Martires in Naga City, Camarines Sur. *Reports from Nestor P. Burgos Jr., Carla P. Gomez, Jhunnex Napallacan and Joey A. Gabieta, PDI Visayas Bureau; Anthony S. Allada, Rolando Pinsoy, Jeffrey M. Tupas, Franklin A. Caliguid, Aquiles Z. Zonio, Grace Cantal-Albasin and Jeofrey Maitem, PDI Mindanao Bureau; Tonette Orejas and Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk; Villamor Visaya Jr., Leoncio Balbin Jr., Vincent Cabreza, Desiree Caluza and Cristina Arzadon, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau; and Delfin T. Mallari Jr., Michael B. Jaucian and Juan Escandor Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Drilon: 2nd most-watched

From page A1

Senate President Franklin Drilon as the portly lawmaker appeared on the TV screen.

"Plasteeek!" he exclaimed, drawing laughter from fellow employees and perhaps echoing the reaction of many who saw Drilon and President Macapagal-Arroyo shake hands as part of the Sona formalities.

Drilon, the highest official to join calls for Ms Arroyo's resignation, easily was the second most watched figure at the annual event.

At the Western appliance store at Ever Gotesco-Commonwealth in Quezon City, clerks watched with amusement as TV cameras caught Drilon being reduced to a glum figure in *barong Tagalog* and refusing to join in the rounds of applause marking the President's speech.

Sore loser

"*Asar talo* (Sore loser)!" another salesman said of Drilon, especially when the Senate president's mood came in sharp contrast to that of his "seatmate," Speaker Jose de Venecia, who gave standing ovations to Ms Arroyo's Sona, especially on the issue of Charter change.

But at least Ms Arroyo and Drilon shook hands before and after she had delivered her piece—two fleeting yet telling moments of "*plastikan* (fake civility)," as the store clerks put it.

The small gathering in front of the TV set also observed that the President, unlike in her first four Sonas, looked "haggard" and appeared to put in some effort in her smile.

Drilon earlier said at the opening of the Senate session that people could expect an "independent" Senate as Ms Arroyo faced impeachment.

"I appeal to all those who wield power: do not subvert our democratic processes; do not subvert the truth. Our people will not allow that," he said

"We assure everyone that in this second regular session of the Thirteenth Congress, our people will continue to see an independent Senate that is even more resolute in the pursuit of economic, political and social reforms," Drilon said.

In the absence of any challenge, yet, he remained safely ensconced as Senate president.

Senators Manuel Villar and Miriam Defensor-Santiago, contenders for Drilon's post, have not marshaled the 13 votes needed to unseat him following his withdrawal of support from Ms Arroyo on July 8 in the midst of calls for her resignation over election fraud allegations.

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said the filing of an impeachment complaint against Ms Arroyo would spur the Senate revamp.

But Pimentel said the Senate would continue to be the "vanguard of democracy."

"It will continue to promote the democratic ideals we hold fast to and shepherd the much-needed reforms of our country," Drilon said.

Working as one

He said the Senate responded to the fiscal crisis in the first regular session by working as one for the passage of the "sin" taxes, the lateral attrition bill, the expanded value-added tax. He said more economic reforms must be done.

"With today's political crises the political and economic chasm that divides our nation and our people will continue to deepen," Drilon said.

He defended his and the Liberal Party's decision to withdraw support from Ms Arroyo on July 8 as the right position to take.

"Moreover, I believe that leaders should have integrity and credibility to govern so that when they call for sacrifices, people will follow," Drilon said.

The Senate meeting started late at around 10:20 a.m. with all the senators, except for Sergio Osmeña III, showing up. It ended at past 11 a.m. without anybody moving to declare the Senate presidency vacant.

Before the opening, Drilon bussed Santiago, reported to be his rival for the presidency, giving a preview of the day's outcome.

No mano a mano

Santiago admitted to reporters that she would not challenge Drilon since she did not have the necessary votes.

"I'm sorry, girls and boys, but Sen. Frank Drilon and I are not going mano a mano today," she told reporters, squelching speculations that she would pull off a surprise by moving to declare Drilon's post vacant.

But she said she "might be interested" in the Senate's top post if it were offered to her.

"Otherwise, I don't stand the ghost of a chance because the choice of a Senate presidency is not an academic competition or even a professional competition," she said.

"It is a question of whether you have a critical mass of senators supporting you, and whether you can gain enough momentum so that you can pick up supporters along the way."

CIVIL RELATIONS are maintained with great effort by protagonists President Arroyo and Senate President Drilon.

EDWIN BACASMAS

Drilon and Senate Majority Floor Leader Francis Pangilinan, two of the three Liberal Party senators who broke away from Ms Arroyo on July 8, thus performed their usual roles in reading and approving the day's agenda.

Never over

"I've always said that my incumbency will depend upon the will of the majority of the senators," Drilon told reporters.

"After four years in the Senate, it's never over till it's over," Pangilinan said when asked if he expected surprises during the day.

Some senators, however, did not rule out the possibility that somebody would file a resolution declaring the Senate presidency vacant after gathering the votes of 13 senators in the coming weeks.

But this early, independent opposition Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile said the minority bloc had no plans to unseat Drilon.

"We should not rock the boat while one section of the government is being rocked in order to maintain the stability of the country," he told reporters. "At the moment, I think there will be no possibility of any disruption in the leadership in the Senate."

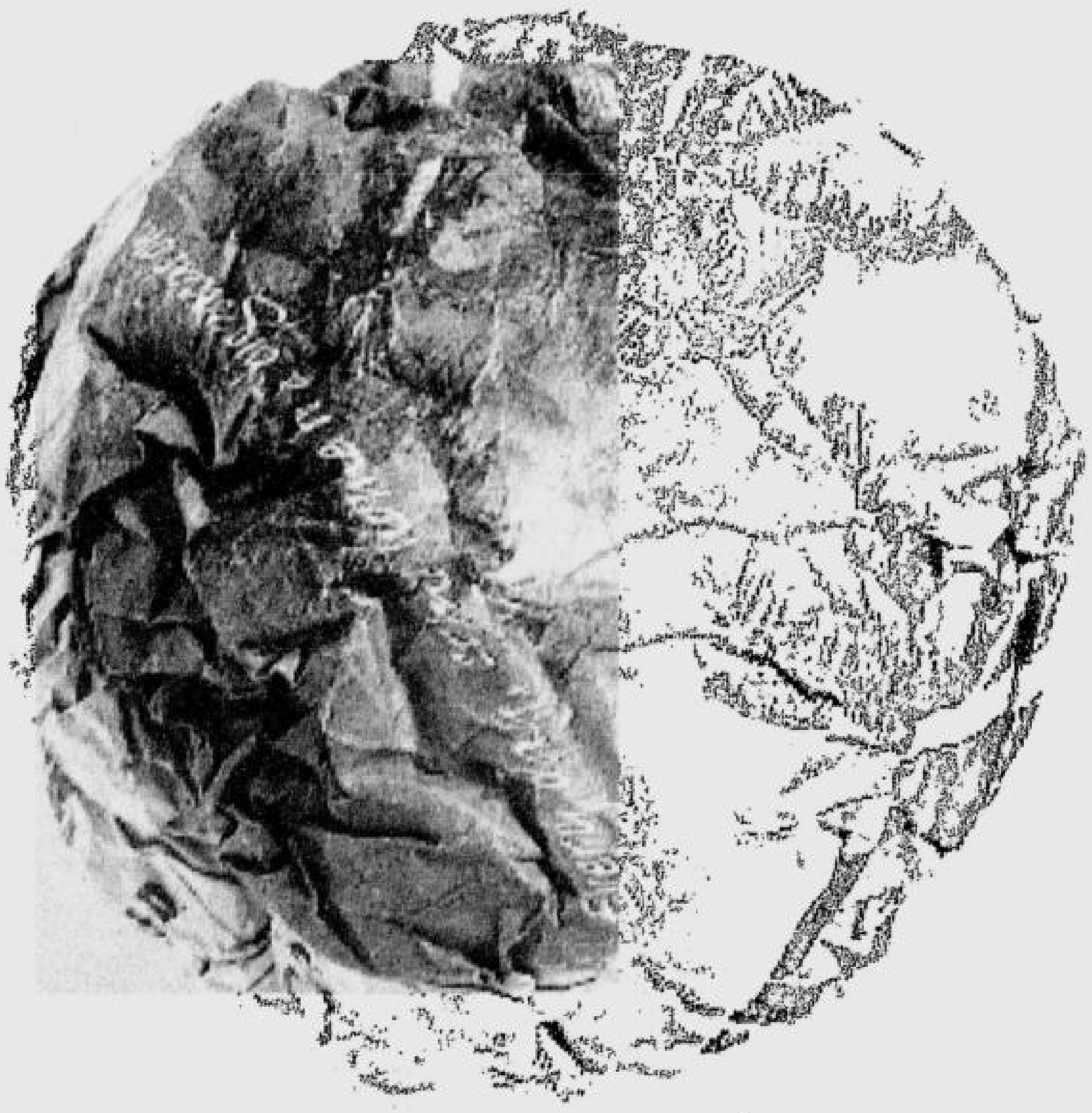
But the short first day session did not end without fireworks.

Before the chamber could approve a House resolution informing the President that both Houses would hold a joint session to hear her Sona, Pimentel stood up to manifest that he wanted to add a "little modification."

"I would like to make an addendum that the Senate minority senators will not be there to attend the Sona," he said, drawing chuckles from members of the minority bloc and prompting Pangilinan to suspend the session.

Boycott

Apart from himself, Pimentel said Senators Osmeña, Enrile, Jinggoy Estrada, Luisa Ejercito, Panfilo Lacson, Jamby Madrigal, Alfredo Lim and Edgardo Angara were snubbing the President's national address, one of the rare times the minority bloc was united on an issue. Reports from Volt Contreras, TJ Burgonio and Juliet Labog-Javellana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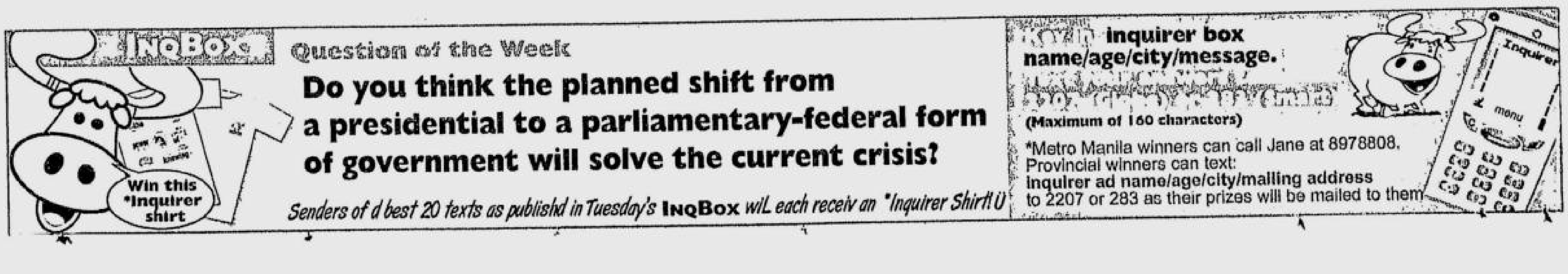
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FPJ leader dies in road accident

By DJ Yap

FRIENDS said he was a big loss to the movement that had sought to make the late actor Fernando Poe Jr. (FPJ) president.

Saturnino "Johnny" Moldero, 56, leader of the opposition group Makabansang Aksyon ng Taongbayan (Mata), died yesterday after a road accident along Don Mariano Marcos Avenue in Quezon City.

Moldero was driving a motorcycle along the southbound lane when he was sideswiped by a Mitsubishi delivery van near Feria Road in Barangay Holy Spirit, traffic police said. He was thrown off the vehicle and suffered a bad fall, police said.

Moldero was rushed to the Gen. Malvar Hospital but died moments later, said SPO1 Reynaldo Patiag. The driver of the van turned himself in after the accident, police said.

The former leader of the FPJ for President Movement was supposed to join a group of antigovernment protesters at the Batasang Pambansa complex after monitoring police barricades at Don Mariano Marcos Avenue when the accident happened, said Linggoy Alcuaz, leader of the National Council of Concerned Volunteers, also a pro-FPJ group.

He described Moldero, an artist and former Mt. Province governor, an "energetic and inquisitive" man.

Makati City Mayor Jejomar Binay said Moldero was "a pillar in the FPJ movement."

Added Alcuaz: "Unlike other leaders who became inactive after the elections, Johnny continued the fight."

Taguig marks 'banak' fest today

By Jocelyn R. Uy

TAGUIG residents will head for the city's riverbanks today as they celebrate the four-century-old legend of the miracle of the "banak" fish.

Dubbed as the Sta. Anang Banak River Festival, the celebration traces its roots to an ancient legend of a woman with a little girl who would invite fishermen from the towns around the Laguna Lake to fish in the river.

The river was owned by the "taga-giiks" (rice threshers), from whom Taguig City got its name.

Mother and child

The presence of the woman and child came to be known in July 1587, some time after the installation of St. Anne as the Patroness of Taguig.

Fishermen in those times said the woman and child who had come with their invitation to fish in the river resembled the images of St. Anne and her little child, Mary, which stood on the church altar.

Since then, every July, the river near St. Anne's church would overflow with thousands of banak fish.

Bounty

Fishermen from neighboring towns would go out in their boats to the river to get their share of the bounty which they considered "blessings" from the saint.

The fishermen would then throw shares of their catch to people who watched them from the riverbanks, who would then toss back native delicacies and fruits in return.

The traditional gathering of fishermen and townsfolk took a festive turn over the years when the image of St. Anne was carried by fishermen in a fluvial procession.

Meanwhile, farmers would dance in the streets in gratitude for the saint's kindness.

Fluvial parade

Residents and visitors from neighboring towns and cities come each year to witness the fluvial procession, either from the riverbank or in bancas (boats), according to Taguig Public Information Officer Ana Santos.

The regatta would start at Bambang Bridge at 6 a.m., proceed to Wawa and then return to Bambang Bridge, highlighted by the traditional tossing of fruits and other food items between boat riders and spectators.

A Mass will follow later at the Archdiocesan Shrine of St. Anne after the fluvial parade.

A colorful dancing parade, called "Panddagguhan" by townfolk, will then take place in the afternoon.

US-style

The festival is also observed by former Taguig residents who are now living in California, Santos said.

Inspired by their devotion to St. Anne, Taguig natives now in the United States organized the Taguig Association of America (TAA) in 1984. The TAA has four chapters—in San Diego, San Jose, San Francisco and Los Angeles—where the event is held alternately every year.

Mayor Freddie Tinga, Santos said, is proud that Taguigeños in the US continue to propagate civic pride, which is listed in his administration's program of governance.

While Tinga leads the fluvial procession today, Vice Mayor George Elias heads a delegation that would join TAA's gathering in San Francisco for their 21st-year celebration of the Feast of St. Anne, said Santos.

JOAN BONDOC

LEAFY PLAYGROUND
Children frolic on a bed of leaves in a shady patch off Don Mariano Marcos Avenue, Quezon City.

Couple in pyramid scam nabbed at Naia

By Tina G. Santos

A COUPLE wanted for allegedly duping several investors through a pyramid scam was arrested by agents of the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) yesterday morning at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

Apprehended on the basis of three warrants of arrest from the regional trial courts of Quezon City, Pasig City and Occidental Mindoro were spouses Maria Rosario and Ronald Geronimo, of Villamor Airbase, Pasay City.

They were arrested based on a petition for extradition filed upon a request made by the justice department to the United States Department of Justice.

The Geronimos, who fled to the US in January 2002, had been charged with estafa, the NBI said.

NBI Interpol executive officer Claro de Castro said the couple was allegedly engaged in the dollar trading business that fraudulently sold millions of capital stocks to unwitting investors.

Several of their victims had filed complaints against the couple after they reportedly failed to deliver the promise of exorbitant returns on investments, the NBI official added.

De Castro said the Geronimos were initially arrested in the US for overstaying. The couple was in US custody for almost four months until the justice department initiated the extradition proceedings against them, De Castro added.

Ocean Adventure should remain open

ON TARGET
Ramon Tulfo

NOW THAT President Macapagal-Arroyo has come out officially in support of a change of government from the American-style presidential system to a parliamentary-federal system, the ball is in the hands of Congress.

Congress—both the House of Representatives and the Senate—should now form itself as a constituent assembly to amend the Constitution. There is no other way out of the current political morass for the country except a change in the form of government.

The parliamentary system suits the Filipino's predisposition to changing the national leadership at the drop of a hat. Under the parliamentary system, the prime minister and his Cabinet can be replaced by a no-confidence vote by the parliament itself.

The one that the President proposed in her State of the Nation Address (Sona) is a parliamentary-federal system. Under this set-up, regions might be divided into federal states. A federal state has complete autonomy in running its own affairs.

If the country adopts the federal system, the clamor of some Mindanao leaders to declare independence would dissipate. Even the Moros would stop fighting the government in Manila because they would have their own government under the federal system.

Under the parliamentary system, choosing national leaders is done by Parliament whose members are elected by the people. Senators, who are elected at large like the President and Vice President, would be adversely affected by the change of government to the parliamentary system. That's why most senators don't like the idea.

* * *

In last Saturday's issue of the INQUIRER, a story said Edgardo Manda, head of the Laguna Lake Development Authority (LLDA), resigned his position. Identified with First Gentleman Mike Arroyo, Manda used to be general manager of the Manila International Airport Authority (Miaa).

Manda was kicked out of Miaa because of a report that he planned to renovate toilets at the cost of P500 million for the many toilets at the Ninoy Aquino International Airport. Suddenly, we heard that this guy was transferred to the LLDA. I wonder whether he also constructed toilets costing millions of pesos each at the LLDA office.

* * *

For the sake of the children, the Ocean Adventure marine park inside Subic Bay, the former US naval base, should not be closed.

Ocean Adventure has given entertainment to children, as well as adults. The aquatic show's main features were false killer whales.

"Hook," the show's most popular whale, died of gastrointestinal illness. His death has brought about a clamor from animal rights advocates to close the park.

Never mind what these advocates say. The park should stay open. If Ocean Adventure is closed because caging wild animals is cruel, then the Manila Zoo should also be closed for the same reason.

GREEN AND CLEAN
In this forward-looking city of the future, street sweepers continue to provide an important service. Alongside Bonifacio Global City's fiber-optic network, its advanced infrastructure and city design, the emerging business district is also attractive to locators and investors because of how it is maintained. Day-to-day upkeep of the city's well-managed greens is carried out by Bonifacio Estate Services Corp.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

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V-Bar slay suspect posts bail

By Tina G. Santos

OLIVER Jameiro, the confessed gunman in a shooting incident outside a Makati City bar last month which claimed the life of budding television director Louis Santiago, was released from detention after posting bail last week.

Charged with homicide by the Department of Justice (DOJ) in the Makati Regional Trial Court, Jameiro, 32, posted a P40,000 bail at the executive judge's office of the Manila Regional Trial Court last Thursday.

However, Special Investigator Albert Gaerlan of the NBI Background Investigation Division said a warrant of arrest could be issued anew against Jameiro once the DOJ is done with its preliminary investigation for the other charges filed against the suspect.

Jameiro is also facing direct assault with frustrated homicide charges for injuring responding policeman Senior Insp. Merquiodi Bodanio, whose right arm was fractured when he was hit by one of the gunman's shots.

Jameiro was also charged with illegal possession of firearm and multiple physical injuries.

After he gave up to authorities on July 3 following a massive manhunt by police and NBI agents, Jameiro admitted that he had randomly fired shots in the midst of a brawl around 4:30 a.m. on June 8, outside the Venezia Bar (V-Bar) in Ayala Center, Makati City.

Jameiro said he merely did so out of frustration, as he ended up being ganged up on even if he only wanted to pacify two women entangled in a fight, one of whom was an acquaintance.

Meanwhile, the NBI is set to file a case against businesswoman Charito Angeles today through separate criminal information that would be consolidated with Jameiro's cases for singular trial.

Gaerlan said Angeles will be charged with violating Article 249 in relation to Article 18 (accomplices in homicide) of the Revised Penal Code.

Angeles, who was with the suspect during the incident, allegedly handed Jameiro the gun right before the shooting, based on the latter's own admission.

Authorities had also learned that Angeles, of Cambridge Street, Hillsborough Subdivision, Muntinlupa City, owned the Toyota Hi-Lux Jameiro used to flee the crime scene.

"These are circumstantial evidences that points to her possible involvement," Gaerlan said.

On the other hand, the NBI said it has yet to fully ascertain the liability of Marine Maj. Robert Velasco. It was reported that Velasco was the owner of the Glock .357 Jameiro allegedly used in the shooting.

METRO
E-mail: pr_metro@inquirer.com.ph
Editor Ester G. Dipasupil

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No 5-star perks for this tourist

By Tarra V. Quismundo

HOGTIED, then robbed inside a five-star hotel.

According to a report from the Makati police, Toyotaka Fujii, a Japanese tourist, suffered such a fate on Saturday afternoon while billeted at the Shangri-la Hotel in Makati City.

Two unidentified robbers allegedly took the same elevator ride as Fujii around 2:40 p.m. on Saturday as the 58-year-old tourist made his way up to his sixth-floor hotel room.

As he opened the door of his room, two men suddenly appeared from behind and shoved him, the police report said. Struggling to repel the attack, Fujii said one of the robbers punched him in the left eye, the report added.

Using a television cord, the robbers hogtied Fujii and then proceeded to collect the tourist's valuables, including ¥200,000 in cash, or roughly P100,000. Also stolen were the tourist's credit cards, ATM cards, two cellular phones, a digital camera, and his eyeglasses.

The robbers then rushed out of the hotel room, eluding security personnel, said the police. As soon as he untied himself, Fujii said he told hotel security about the incident.

The INQUIRER tried several times to get the side of hotel security officers, but was told they were not aware of the incident, and instead questioned the source of this reporter's story.

Makati Shangri-la's corporate communications office, however, said an official report on the incident had yet to reach its office. The guest had left the country, and requested the hotel not to divulge details on the matter, the office added.

Makati police said they would warn security personnel of other hotels in the city about this particular modus operandi of robbers.

Records from their Theft and Robbery Unit showed that a similar incident happened last month in a small hotel in the city where a Korean was victimized by two robbers who surprised him outside the door of his room.

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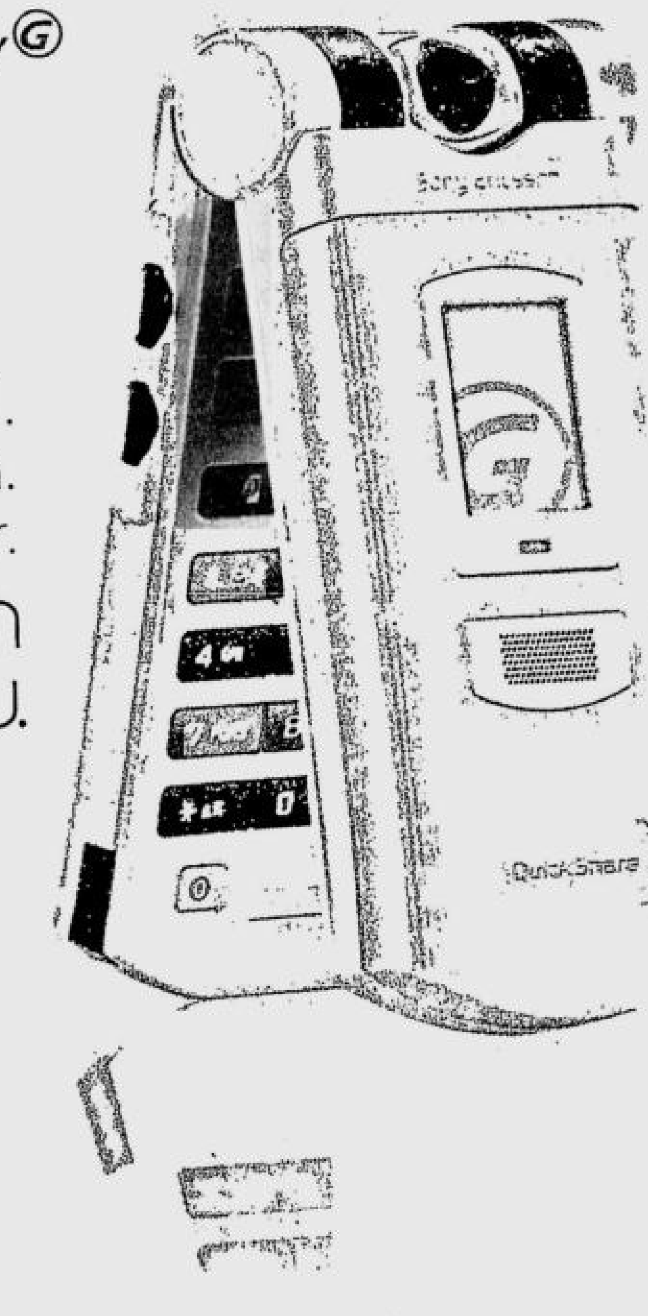

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METROBRIEFS

Cabbie found dead in Taguig City

A MAN was found dead inside the taxi he was driving early morning yesterday in Taguig City. While on patrol duty at around 4:40 a.m. along General Santos Avenue in Upper Bicutan yesterday, Taguig City police discovered an abandoned taxi parked in one of its unlit streets, said Southern Police District Operations Division chief Carlos de Sagun in his report. Inside the taxi, police found the body of 41-year-old Melchor Natividad of Sta. Lucia Street, Novaliches, Quezon City, riddled with gunshot wounds in his face and body. Police believe that Natividad was a victim of a holdup gang. However, the victim's money amounting to P750 was found untouched by Scene of the Crime Operatives. Three spent shells and three slugs of a .45-cal. pistol were also recovered from the crime scene. The victim was brought later to the Quiogue Funeral Homes. *Jocelyn R. Uy*

'Peaceful' day at north Metro

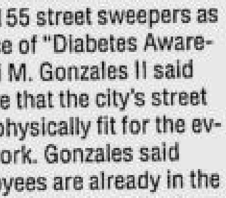
POLICEMEN in Northern Metro Manila had a relatively peaceful day yesterday as massive demonstrations accompanying President Macapagal-Arroyo's State of the Nation Address were confined to Quezon City, which is under the Central Police District. In Valenzuela City, a solitary case of theft was recorded in the blotter of the city's police station. The theft victim was identified as Ronald Allan Sagun, 27, married and a field cashier of ABS-CBN, of No. 37 Diam St., Gen. T. de Leon, Valenzuela City. Police said that Sagun discovered early morning yesterday that his bag containing P150,000 in cash and two cellular phones worth P24,000 was missing and believed to have been stolen. Investigators, however, failed to find signs of forcible entry in Sagun's residence. *Nancy C. Carvajal*

Free diabetes checkup for street sweepers

THE CITY government of Mandaluyong will conduct a free diabetes consultation and health checkup for its more than 155 street sweepers as part of the city's observance of "Diabetes Awareness Week." Mayor Neptali M. Gonzales II said the program aims to ensure that the city's street sweepers are healthy and physically fit for the everyday demands of their work. Gonzales said since many of these employees are already in the 40-50 age bracket, a regular health examination is important. Rose Pagkalinawan of the city's Health Education and Promotion Office said street sweepers could avail of free FBS screening, cholesterol examination, ECG plus foot care. Those who would be diagnosed for diabetes or high blood pressure would be given starter doses of medicine. The consultations will be held on Monday at the Kaban ng Hiyas building, City Hall complex, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Help Abegail

FIVE-YEAR-OLD Abegail Dupa needs your help. She has been diagnosed with left-foot mass hemangioma by doctors at the Philippine General Hospital. Her father, Joven, works as a tricycle driver and construction laborer, and cannot shoulder the cost of her treatment. Her family is appealing to kindhearted readers for financial assistance. Interested parties may contact 0916-8710912. Donations can also be sent through Equitable PCI Bank, Meycauayan, Bulacan Branch to account #1191-05688-0.


ABEGAIL Dupa

UP Ecosoc summit

THE UNIVERSITY of the Philippines Economics Society will be holding a National Youth Summit for Sustainable Development on July 30 at the Diosdado Macapagal Hall at the UP School of Economics in Diliman, Quezon City. Topics of focus are Population Control and Business and the Environment, with speakers from the Asian Institute of Management, Department of Environment and Natural Resources, the House of Representatives, Philippine Business for the Environment and the Population Commission. Tickets will be sold at P300 (inclusive of meals, conference kit and a tree under your name). Awarding of the Click the City! photojournalism contest and an exhibit of entries will also be held. For questions and reservations, email nyssd2005@yahoogroups.com or contact Patti at 0917-8997993, Ren at 0920-9266275, or Lyra at 0916-2214656.

TUESDAY,
JULY 26, 2005

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

SPORTS

E-mail: pr_sports@inquirer.com.ph

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Compiled by L. Mangulat

MOTOR SPORTS: 2005 F1 German Grand Prix Race Day; 9 p.m. (r); STAR Sports—Shift to reverse and witness the race over the weekend.

GOLF: The 2005 Open Championship; 12 noon (r); ESPN—Catch the replay of the third round from St. Andrews.

BASKETBALL: NBA Summer League; 8 a.m. and 11 a.m.; Solar Sports—Detroit takes on New Orleans while Boston tangles with Golden State.

Schedules subject to change without prior notice.

WHAT'S INSIDE

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RP cagers down Koreans for third Jones Cup win

Pinoys share lead with US, Russia

TAIPEI—It's payback time for Asi Taulava.

The pain of losing in the 2002 Asian Games semifinals via a last-second jumper still fresh in his mind, the 6-foot-9 Taulava asserted his might in the paint and powered RP-San Miguel Beer to a thrilling 79-75 victory over South Korea Monday in the 27th R. William Jones Cup International Basketball Tournament at the Taipei Physical Education College gym here.

Expecting the Koreans to break their plays and force them to go to the perimeter, the Filipinos decided to take the ball down low. The big men responded and gave RP-SMB its third win in as many starts and a share of the lead in the 10-nation meet alongside the Americans and the Russians.

RP-San Miguel Beer opened the tournament with an 82-71 win over Qatar Saturday before tripping Kazakhstan, 82-74, Sunday.

Playing his best game so far, Taulava scattered a team-high 14 points, most of them coming when the Koreans started closing in. He got ample help from Kerby Raymundo, who also had his breakout game, chipping in nine points while holding his own on the other end against the Korean big men.

Although vengeance didn't come at the expense of the players from the 2002 Asiad team—South Korea is represented in the Jones Cup by its 23-and-under team—Taulava said the victory still gave him reason to celebrate.

"It really feels good beating Korea," said Taulava, who was part of the Philippine team that lost the chance to battle for the gold in the 2002 Asiad in Busan when Lee Sang-min connected on a last-second shot.

"That loss hurt a lot. I'm glad we played a good game against Korea this time."

Trailing 33-34 at the half, RP-San Miguel Beer's big men buckled down to work, taking the ball strong to the hoop. When bottled up down low, they flicked passes to Jayjay Helterbrand or Brandon Cablay.

A three-point play by Helterbrand gave the Filipinos a 69-56 lead, time down to 6:26.

But the Koreans battled back as coach Jin Hyo-joon let his long-range bombers loose. A three-pointer from Yang Hee-jong sparked a big comeback that got South Korea to within two points twice, the last at 75-77 on a split by Kim Yong-hwan from the stripe, time down to 34.3 seconds.

MILLER: Backcourt loss for RP-SMB

A defensive lapse by the Koreans, however, led to an easy Dondon Hontiveros layup with 14.8 seconds remaining. That set the final score as Kang Byung-hun was called for traveling on the next play.

"Asi was a force on both offense and defense," said national coach Chot Reyes, who fielded only nine men after Willie Miller was sidelined by injury.

"The first one-third of the job is done. We're up against a relatively light opponent (India) tomorrow, and then the big games come in again."

Kelly Williams, who scored only a solitary point in the Filipinos' first two games, fired nine points, two coming from an alley-oop dunk that got the crowd on its feet early in the fourth period.

Despite their superb effort, the Filipinos' big men allowed Korean 6-9 center Joo Thesoo to finish with a game-high 23 points.

The Filipinos go up against India at 4 p.m. Tuesday.

The scores:

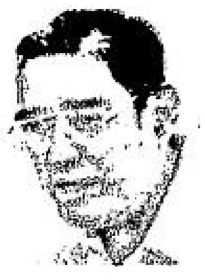
RP-SMB 79—Taulava 14, Cablay 11, Helterbrand 11, Raymundo 9, Williams 9, Hontiveros 9, de la Çruz 7, Adducul 6, de Ocampo 3.

SOUTH KOREA 75—Joo 23, No 15, Yang 13, Kim YH 9, Kang 6, Kim J 5, Lee HM 4, Lee KJ 0, Song 0, Park 0.

Quarters: 17-18, 33-34, 59-51, 79-75

Martelino picked to head new cage body

By Musong R. Castillo


MARTELINO

MAURICIO "Moying" Martelino, a former top official of the Asian Basketball Confederation, was unanimously elected yesterday president of the Philippine Basketball Federation.

The mild-mannered longtime secretary general of the banned Basketball Association of the Philippines ran unopposed after Cebu Rep. Eduardo Gullas, also a former BAP official, begged off late Sunday, citing his commitment to Congress and old age.

"This came all of a sudden," said the 70-year-old Martelino, an incorporator of the new group, which faces the daunting task of convincing the international basketball federation (Fiba) that it

MARTELINO/ A26

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Alaska rejects report on possible Eala replacement

By Musong R. Castillo

ALASKA'S representative to the PBA board of governors yesterday denied ever talking to a prospective successor to Philippine Basketball Association commissioner Noli Eala.

Joaqui Trillo, also the Aces' team manager, called the INQUIRER to categorically deny a story that came out yesterday, saying that "everything that the Alaska team does is aboveboard."

The INQUIRER, quoting sources from the four ballclubs, ran a story on Monday that said four teams were talking to one potential prospect without knowing that they were talking to the same man.

Trillo said that being the Alaska representative to the PBA board, he has talked to no one in particular about the commissionership.

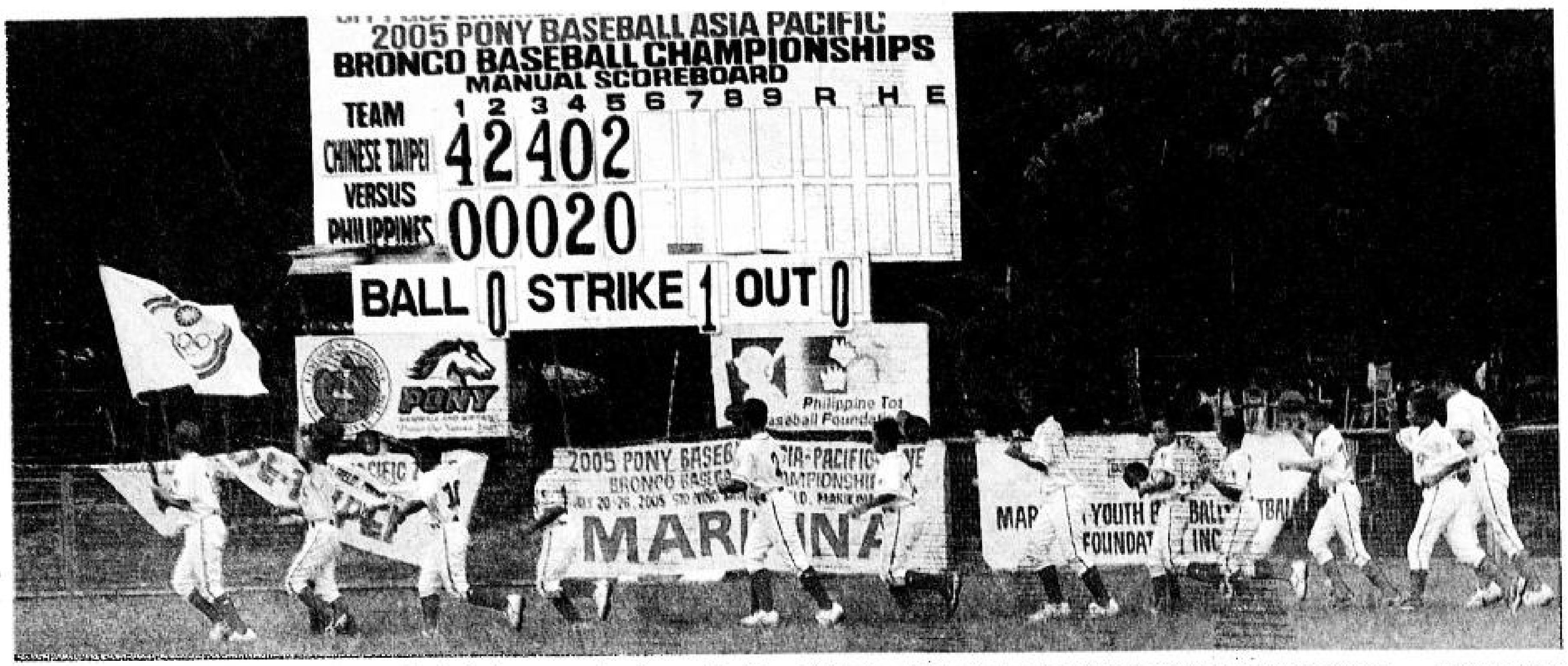
Despite plummeting gate receipts and television ratings, Trillo said Alaska is "satisfied" with Eala's performance.

"It (dip in attendance and TV ratings) goes with the economy, the political situation and all that," Trillo said. "We (the PBA) will get back."

But the INQUIRER source remains steadfast in his claim, even as the PBA board of governors set for Aug. 2 a crucial meeting to evaluate the performance of Eala, among other matters.

The other teams which the INQUIRER sources have mentioned as keen on looking for a new commissioner are Sta. Lucia, Red Bull Barako and Talk 'N Text.

Officials of Red Bull and Talk 'N Text have crossed swords with Eala, a stickler for PBA rules, many times in the past.



CHINESE-TAIPEI'S repeat champions make their victory parade after routing Team Philippines in the finals of the Asia Pacific Bronco baseball meet. AUGUST DELA CRUZ

Taiwan batters bag crown

Champs overwhelm Filipinos to claim World Series berth

CHINESE-TAIPEI peppered Team Philippines with a volley of hits in the third inning en route to an abbreviated 12-2 victory yesterday that capped its impressive sweep of the 2005 Asia Pacific Zone Bronco Baseball Championship before a big crowd at the Sto. Nino diamond in Marikina City.

Lin Chih-hao led the Taiwanese siege as he drove in five runs on three hits in four times at bat, including a grand slam home run in the third inning that sailed over the pink-colored fence at right field.

Lin's grand slam blast highlighted a 14-hit attack by the Taiwanese, also the winners of last year's event held in Beijing. The game was halted in the fifth inning due to the 10-run mercy rule.

Wang Chia-ching, Lin Tzu-wei, Chen Wei-hao and Liu Yu-chen backed up Lin with a combined eight hits and seven runs batted in (RBIs).

The hosts, made up of batters from this world-class shoe-making city, headed by Mayor Maria Lourdes Fernando, scored their only runs at the bottom of the fourth inning to make it 2-10.

After hurler Laurren Vispo and Kenneth Natividad reached second and third bases on singles, first baseman Erin Ermino blasted a double to left field that sent them home.

Zing Chung-lin, who took the win in a no-relief job, fanned out the next three Filipino batters to close the hosts' account, sparking a celebration by the Taiwanese.

The victory earned for Chinese-Taipei another trip to California for the Bronco Baseball World Series starting Aug. 4.

After pitching a five-hitter in the Philippines' stunning 7-2 win over Japan Friday, Vispo struck out nine Taiwanese batters but just couldn't neutralize their awesome form at the plate.

"*Malalakas talaga silang pumalo* (They're strong hitters)," said the 12-year-old Vispo.

Still, Rodolfo "Boy" Tingzon Jr., president of the organizing Philippine Tot Baseball Foundation, was proud of the RP tots' performance in the tournament backed by Blue Wave Marquinton, Asia Brewery Absolute, Jollibee, Golden Vine Laboratory, Chikiting Patrol Foundation, and Image Travels and Tours.

"There is nothing to be ashamed of," said Tingzon, who is also arranging the 2005 Pan Pacific Junior Baseball Games slated Aug. 11-14, also in this city. "The boys played their best and we should be proud of them."

The Filipinos consoled themselves with the victory of Joseph Angelo Ocampo in the hitting derby. Ocampo hit six homers, edging Chinese Taipei's Lin Tzu-wei, who had five.

Washington, GMA & Eala

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

TWO-HUNDRED-TWELVE years ago, George Washington, the first president of the United States of America, delivered his second inaugural address following his reelection.

Considered the greatest American president ever, Washington was the greatly respected commander of the Continental Army during the Revolutionary War and presiding officer of the Constitutional Convention of 1787. He is described as the American President whose dignity in "bowing to the supremacy of the law over personality and in relinquishing presidential power after establishing a precedent of two terms" were among his important legacies.

Washington's second inaugural address on March 4, 1793, was a milestone in public speaking, for it consisted only of two paragraphs. I'm reprinting the speech in the hope that GMA learns a thing or two from it, no matter that she delivered her Sona yesterday.

Washington's speech:

"Fellow Citizens: I am again called upon by the voice of my country to execute the functions of its chief magistrate. When the occasion proper for it shall arrive, I shall endeavor to express the high sense I entertain of this distinguished honor, and of the confidence which has been reposed in me by the people of united America.

"Previous to the execution of any official act of the president of the Constitution requires an oath of office. This oath I am now about to take, and in your presence: That if it shall be found during my administration of the government I have in any instance violated willingly or knowingly the injunctions thereof, I may (besides incurring constitutional punishment) be subject to the upbraidings of all who are now witnesses of the present solemn ceremony."

End of speech.

Who can beat that?

If only ALL of our politicians are like Washington—embracing the principle of "less talk, more work"—our country may yet gain the progress we've been yearning for all these years.

* * *

The "resign virus" triggered by the "Gloriagate" in the aftermath of the "Hello Garci Tapes" seems to have infected Philippine sports, too.

Coach Bong Ramos has left FedEx and reportedly joined Talk 'N Text as one of Joel Banal's assistants.

Unlike GMA, Bong was not asked to resign, though. He resigned over his disagreement with management policy that requires him to use all 12 players in a game.

Coaching is the hardest job in sports. As I keep saying, a coach is only good for as long as he is winning titles for his team. It is not enough that he win games. To team owners, only championship trophies matter.

* * *

Which brings me to commissioner Eala.

Is Eala losing the PBA throne this early in his career?

I mean, has Eala been a bad commissioner that rumors persist about a bloc in the PBA board wanting him out?

If reports are to be believed, four teams (Talk 'N Text, Sta. Lucia, Red Bull and Alaska) have talked to a guy they want to appoint in place of Eala.

It's that easy, huh?

Assuming this is true, how sure are we that the handpicked guy will not turn out to be a puppet of the rebel group if he proceeds to succeed Eala?

You allow yourself to be used in a tug-of-war, you are nothing but cannon fodder. You will not have a mind of your own once you are finally up there.

If at all, what the four had done—assuming again the rumor is true—would be the unhealthiest practice I have ever come across with in my decades of covering the PBA.

Whoever floated the rumor ought to examine his head.

If true that the four teams are hell-bent on ousting Eala, they should do it the most honorable way: Resolve it within the confines of the four walls of the PBA boardroom.

We aren't concocting the surefire formula to kill the PBA, are we?

Otherwise, let's all be backstabbers and hasten the demise of the league we had all painstakingly put up 30 years ago.

It takes time to build an institution, just one lousy move, if not one judgmental lapse, to topple it.

Ask GMA.

***

Comments to menju@pldtdsl.net

Gejon guns for WBA title

By Salven L. Lagumbay, *Contributor*

UNBEATEN Cebuano Eribertó Gejon challenges World Boxing Association minimumweight champion Yutaka Niida on Sept. 25 at The Arena in Yokohama, Japan.

A Wakee Salud protege, Gejon, considered tall at 5-foot-6 for a fighter who weighs only 105 lb, is ranked No. 2 by the Venezuela-based WBA, and boasts an unblemished record of 21 wins (13 KOs) and a draw.

"I am ready to give Niida a good fight," the 27-year-old Gejon said in an interview.

It will be a tough battle, though, for the Mandaue City-based fighter.

The 26-year-old Yokohama-based reigning champ Niida (18-1-3, 8 KOs) will be making the third defense of the title he regained following a self-imposed retirement in 2001.

Considered one of Japan's best fighters, Niida last saw action on April 16 when he decisioned Korean Kim Jae-won to retain his title.

Martelino picked . . .

From page A25

is the new and legitimate association for the sport in the country.

Small Basketeers founder Nic Jorge was elected senior vice president, while Philippine Basketball League commissioner Chino Trinidad and Pedro Lee of Bicol were named VPs for men and women's basketball, respectively.

Martelino, who became the ABC secretary general as a result of his long stint with the BAP under Lito Puyat, withheld naming the secretary general "pending consultation with the board of trustees."

Fr. Victor Calvo of Letran and Fr. Maximino Rendon of Adamson were named treasurer and auditor, respectively.

Martelino made no secret that the first order of his watch is to regain Fiba recognition for the Philippines, at least before the staging of the Southeast Asian Games here.

Marcelo tops second round of Lynx Cup

JOHN Marcelo of Marcelo Racing Circuit drove consistently to dominate Round 2 of the TRS Ford Lynx Cup recently at the Batangas Racing Circuit.

Marcelo, a former jet ski champion, stayed on course for the title by sandwiching a win in the second race with a third place and a runner-up showing.

He topped two races in Round 1.

Clocking the fastest time of 2 minutes 10.335 seconds in the seventh lap, Marcelo turned back Ivan Carapiet to clinch victory in the second race.

Marcelo led for most part of the third race until he was hit from the rear by Pia Boren. Despite a dragging loose rear bumper, Marcelo salvaged second, just 1.744 seconds behind Boren.

Marcelo later dismissed the incident with a smile.

"Though I feel it's better finishing the race weekend with an undamaged car, it's (the incident) all part of racing and we all try our best to get ahead," said Marcelo.

"This is my first year in circuit racing, and the camaraderie among the racers is very light and fun."

Pazon rules first BRC drag racing

PAZON'S Honda hatchback (above) crosses the payoff line way ahead of Danny Yema's prototype buggy in the Quick-8 face-off.

ROSARIO, BATANGAS—Walter Pazon of Blanche Racing became the pioneer champion of the country's first permanent and legal drag strip as he stashed away two titles in the highly successful inaugural of the BRC Drag Racing Festival at the Batangas Racing Circuit here.

The 27-year-old Pazon, a five-year veteran of drag racing, captured the Quick 8 and Class A titles against separate rivals in the event sanctioned by the governing Automobile Association of the Philippines.

He posted the fastest time of 12.837 seconds in his Honda hatchback on the 800-meter track to rule the Quick 8 division over Danny Yema, who timed 13.703 on a prototype buggy jeep.

Pazon later clocked 12.942 seconds to capture the Class A crown over teammate Jan Sarmiento, who timed 13.854.

"I took some time adjusting the setting of the car and I'm happy the effort paid off," said Pazon. "We posted the first record time on the strip and we won two titles which I didn't really expect."

Winning the other divisions were Louie Montalbo and Raymond Conti.

Montalbo, aboard his Honda Civic, ruled Class B with a time of 16.097 seconds over Christopher Ambipa who lost the face-off due to breakout.

Conti steered his Black Honda to victory in Class C, clocking 16.255 against Russel Torres, also a victim of a breakout.

Clerk of course Fil Gulfin and Jun Espino supervised the inaugural races.

"We're thankful to all those who came and supported the inaugural race," said BRC manager Sherwin Mojica. "The competitors gave positive response on the Drag Strip and the race, and are asking when the next race will be."

Binalonan U-18 chess set

CASH prizes are at stake in a one-day under-18 chess tournament to be held at the Binalonan gymnasium in Binalonan, Pangasinan, on Aug. 27. The tournament is open to all players who have not turned 18 on the day of the event. The champion wins P3,000 plus trophy, the second placer P2,000 and a medal, third placer P1,000 and a medal and the fourth finisher P500. The fifth to 10th finishers will receive prizes in kind. For inquiries, call lawyer Adrian Cabida at 0928-2088639.

Makati, FEI-Cavite fives take Espiritu cage openers

CHEERED on by a big partisan crowd, the PIO-Makati Stars surprised star-studded Pamplona Plantation, 88-81, Sunday at the start of the 9th Danny Espiritu Cup basketball tournament at the Washington gym in Makati City. Dennis Rodriguez, who played for the defunct Batangas 29ers in the NBC's first season, scored a game-high 27 points to lead the Stars over Pamplona, which boasted ex-pros Pido Jarencio and Bonel Balingit and former national players Richie Melencio and Samigue Eman. NBC's Far Eastern Insurance-Cavite squad turned back San Sebastian Recoletos-Cavite, 68-65, later to share the early lead with the Stars in the tournament supported by San Miguel, Air21, Healthy Option, Funtastic KTV, General Milling Corp., Spring Cooking Oil and Prime Channel. Other teams in the event held in cooperation with NBC are KSK Food Products-backed Parañaque Jets, Frio Mixx, Homer Go, Sta. Rosa-Laguna and Mediatrix.

Lance leaves lasting legacy

PARIS—To have gone where nobody had gone before by winning seven Tours de France is in itself an unprecedented contribution to the sport of cycling. Lance Armstrong's legacy reaches even further.

The American's human story, his victory over cancer that led to the much more prosaic victories over the hardships of the Tour, is his greatest achievement.

That Armstrong became the most successful Tour rider in history after a near-fatal illness gave hope to millions and the yellow wristband worn by cycling fans around the world to help Armstrong's cancer foundation bears testimony to his leading role in that respect.

His mission as a spokesperson for the millions affected by cancer worldwide will become even more time consuming now that he has retired from the sport.

Armstrong's entry in the history books should not, however, be reduced to his successful battle against cancer.

He is simply one of the greatest bike riders and one of the greatest champions of all time.

The Tour's 102-year history is filled with drama, human tragedies and heroics and it was almost inevitable that such a larger-than-life figure as Armstrong should play a big part.

To win seven Tours requires 150 days on the bike, riding some 200 km each day, in rain and in intense heat, up the highest mountains in Europe and down into windswept valleys at more than 50 kph.

It involves 200 other riders out to beat you, months and kilometers of exhausting training in the cold of winter and in spring, far from home.

This was Armstrong's life for the past seven years, a life of sacrifice and self-inflicted suffering.

It took a tough man to dedicate seven years of his life to the single task of winning the Tour, to lose weight, change his pedaling frequency, improve his climbing skills.

Any little thing could have stopped Armstrong's plan: crashes, illness, bad luck. *Reuters*

TOUR DE FRANCE 2005
Discovery
TREK

LAST AND SWEETEST: Lance Armstrong savors his seventh and final trip to the podium with his children. AFP

Viewership up; cycling shifts gear

WASHINGTON—Nine years ago, most ordinary Americans would have asked "Lance who?" if you had mentioned Lance Armstrong.

Today, even those who do not normally follow cycling know that he has survived cancer, just won the Tour de France for the seventh straight time and launched an international craze with his yellow LiveStrong wristbands.

Often referred to just as "Lance," Armstrong was ranked 15th on Forbes Magazine's list of the top 100 most powerful celebrities this year. He appears as comfortable on the red carpet arm-in-arm with rock star girlfriend Sheryl Crow as he is on his bicycle.

Armstrong—known for being as obsessive about his bike training as he is about his many sponsor obligations and cancer-awareness efforts—made history last year with his sixth straight win at the Tour de France and retired from the sport on a high note with a seventh victory in this year's race which ended on Sunday.

He has raised more than $51 million and sparked a worldwide phenomenon over the past year with his LiveStrong charity wristbands, helped to revitalize the US cycling world and left a mark on the millions of cancer survivors in the United States.

Though Americans are nothing like cycling-mad Europeans, interest in cycle racing has grown with Armstrong's success.

The Outdoor Life Network (OLN), the only channel in the United States that covers the Tour live, has seen a huge jump in the number of people watching cycling. Ratings are 40 percent higher for Tour viewers this year over 2004 and OLN viewership in the month of July is up 242 percent over June. *Reuters*

Bush congratulation

WASHINGTON—Lance Armstrong's triumphant farewell to cycling Sunday in Paris with his seventh consecutive Tour de France victory brought praise from across America, including a call from US President George W. Bush. Bush telephoned Armstrong, a fellow Texan, shortly after the finish from his retreat in Camp David, Maryland, said White House spokesperson Christie Parell. *AFP*

TIGER Woods will lead an elite field of 100 in the chase for the $5-million pot. REUTERS

ASIA'S RICHEST

Woods to compete in Shanghai

BEIJING—World No. 1 Tiger Woods will head at least 20 of the world's top 50 players in November's Champions tournament in Shanghai, set to be the richest golf event in Asia.

Up to 100 players will compete for $5 million in prize money at the Nov. 10-13 tournament, co-sanctioned by the Asian Tour, the PGA Tour of Australia and the South African Sunshine Tour, the China Daily said on Monday.

"This is the richest event in China and the richest event in Asia," Tong Jinqiang, Shanghai manager for sponsor International Management Group, was quoted as saying.

China is hosting a growing number of lucrative international tournaments, including this year's Asian Open and other European tour events.

Golf is booming in China as the country's middle class swells. The country has over 250 courses and many more are under construction. *Reuters*

Phelps flops, then rebounds; Schoeman rips world record

MONTREAL—Michael Phelps rebounded from a rare failure to capture his first gold medal at the world championships on Sunday after his bid to win a record eight titles had been sunk in his very first event.

The American struck gold in the 4x100-meter freestyle relay after he flopped out of the individual 400-m freestyle, won by Australian Grant Hackett, who created his own legacy by becoming the first swimmer to win gold medals at four world championships.

Australia won a second title on Sunday with an expected victory in the women's sprint relay while French teenager Laure Manaudou overcame a bout of nerves to win the women's 400-m freestyle and add the world title to the Olympic crown she captured at Athens last year.

Roland Schoeman, part of the South African team that spectacularly ruined Phelps' campaign for eight golds in Athens, set a world record in the semifinals of the men's 50-m butterfly on Sunday, stopping the clock at 23.01 seconds to wipe 0.29 off the previous record established by American Ian Crocker in Austin last year.

Phelps had been one of the favorites in the 400m but faded so badly at the end of his morning heat that he finished 18th overall and had to watch the final from the stands.

With Ian Thorpe taking the year off, there was no one left to mount a serious challenge to Hackett and the undisputed king of long distance swimming obligingly cruised to his first 400-m world title after finishing runner-up to Thorpe at the previous three world championships.

Russia's Yuri Prilukov was second while Oussama Mellouli of Tunisia came home third.

"It was a shame that Ian and Michael weren't there in the final but I really wasn't thinking about that too much," Hackett said. *Reuters*

Watson wrests Sr British golf

LONDON—Tom Watson won his second Senior British Open title in three years on Sunday after a tense play-off with Ireland's Des Smyth at the Royal Aberdeen Golf Club.

The 55-year-old American took victory after enduring his second Open play-off in two years after he took the honors at Turnberry in 2003.

Watson, who also won five British Open titles before switching to the Seniors tour, needed three extra holes to clinch the top prize ahead of the 51-year-old Smyth after they had both finished on four under par.

The play-off saw both players par the 18th twice before they switched to the par three 17th where Smyth hit the bunker from the tee.

He then failed to hold his 20-foot par putt which sealed victory for Watson who two-putted from the back of the green. "This trophy certainly means something to me," said a delighted Watson.

"It was something of a struggle and it looked as if we could have played that 18th hole all night and still been locked together." Smyth was philosophical about his defeat, "I had a couple of three putts and you can't do that against this class of opposition. I hit a poor tee shot at 17th. My concentration maybe just lapsed a bit but Tom's a great champion." Overnight leader Watson was caught by Greg Norman and Smyth and, although the Australian dropped off the pace, the Irishman virtually matched his American counterpart shot for shot from the eighth onward.

Norman holed a 25-foot birdie putt at the last for a 68 to finish three under. *AFP*

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Race 2—1. Tropical Sun 2. Carolina Balle 3. Rose and Toy
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Race 4—1. Amaretta 2. Red Bells 3. Coolmore 4. Inner Wheeler
Race 5—1. Hakuna Matata 2. Bunker Buster 3. Farragut's Order 4. Nitty Gritty 5. War Epic
Race 6—1. U Are My Sunshine 2. Money Man 3. Yokozuna 4. Friendly Venture
Race 7—1. Golden Cat 2. Shining Lance 3. Aminin 4. Jay Nicole 5. Queen's Gold
Race 8—1. Lightning Strike 2. Seven Lakes/Prophet 3. Gigi's Gold 4. Men of Honor/Happy Again 5. Best in Class 6. Red Anya

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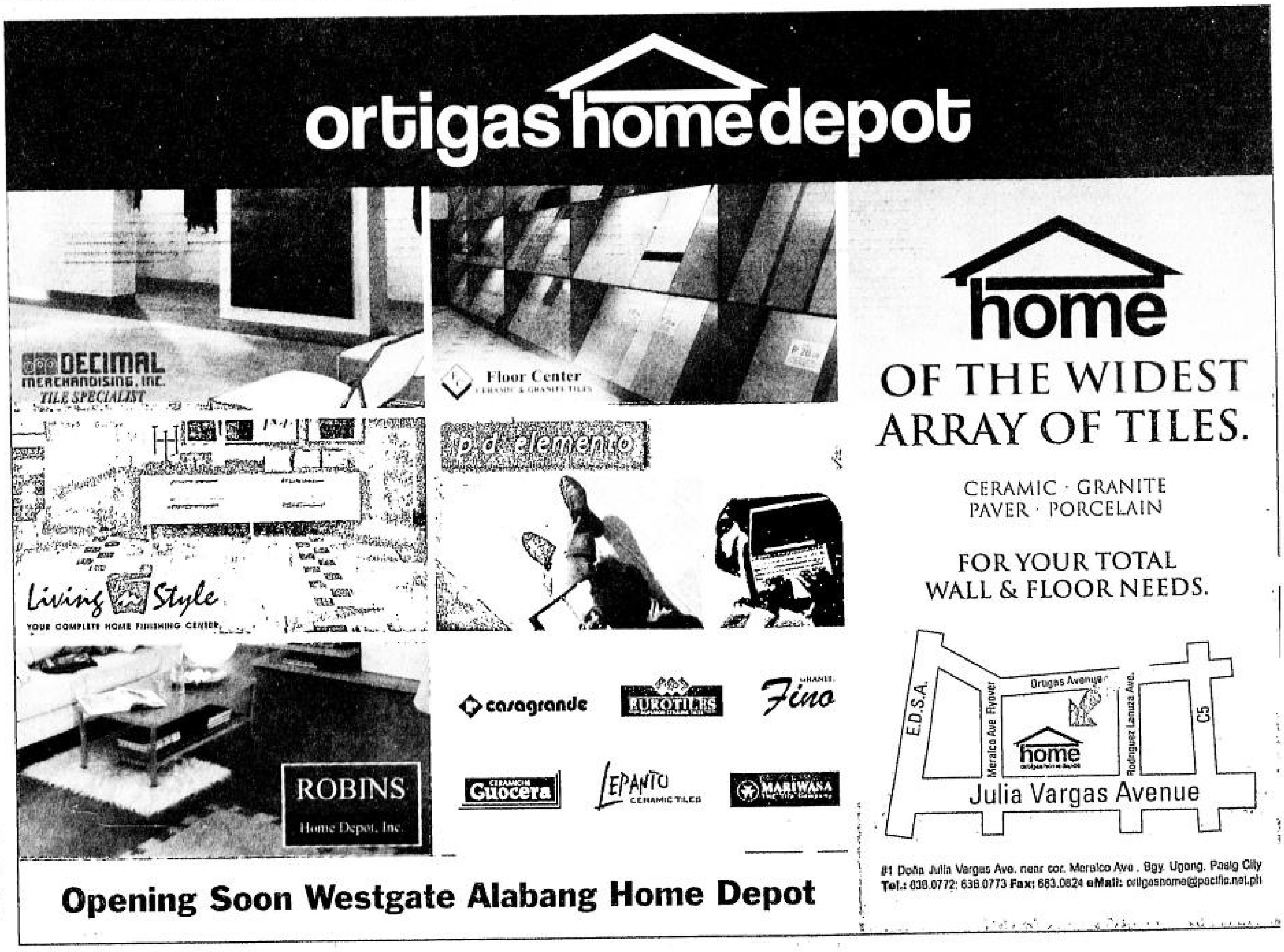
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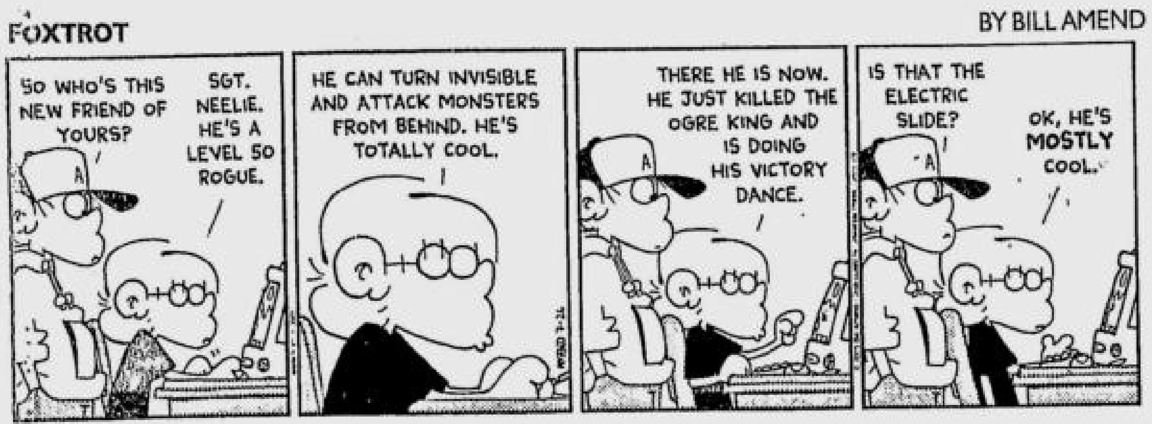
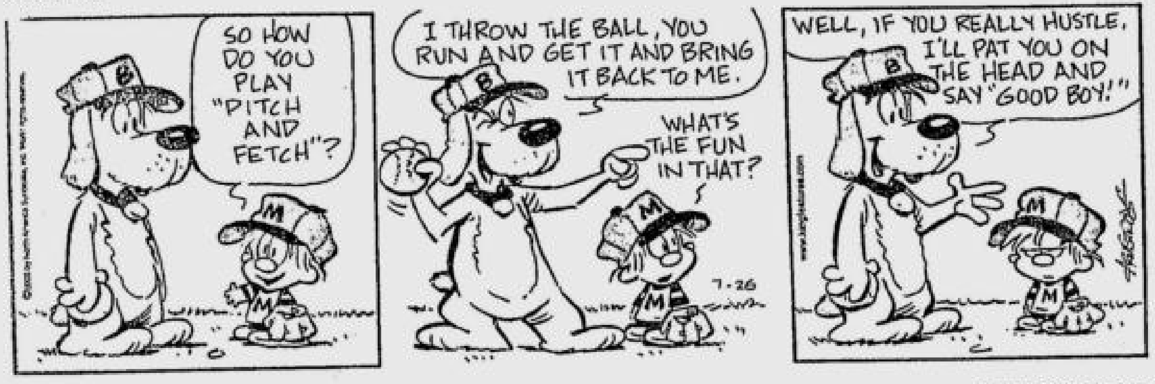
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


SO WHO'S THIS NEW FRIEND OF YOURS?
SGT. NEELIE. HE'S A LEVEL 50 ROGUE.
HE CAN TURN INVISIBLE AND ATTACK MONSTERS FROM BEHIND. HE'S TOTALLY COOL.
THERE HE IS NOW. HE JUST KILLED THE OGRE KING AND IS DOING HIS VICTORY DANCE.
IS THAT THE ELECTRIC SLIDE?
OK, HE'S MOSTLY COOL.

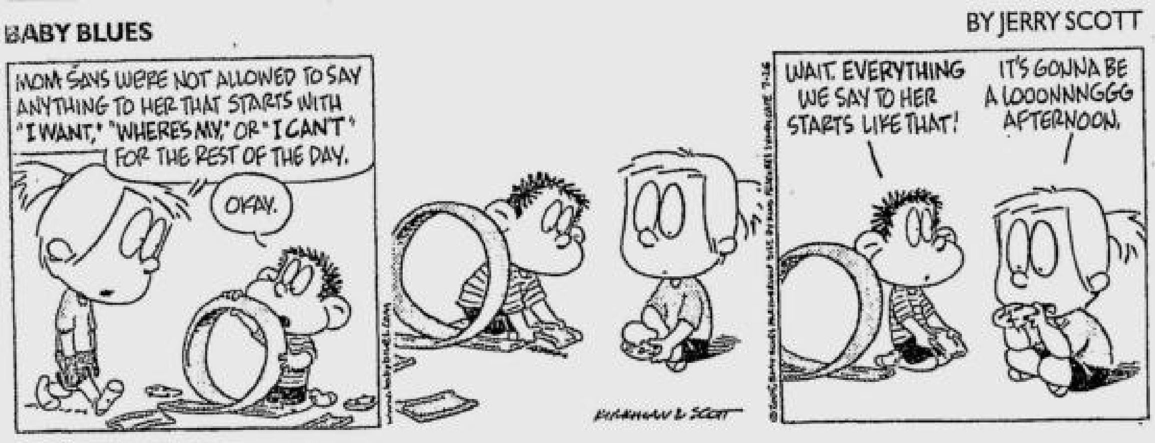
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


SO HOW DO YOU PLAY "PITCH AND FETCH"?
I THROW THE BALL, YOU RUN AND GET IT AND BRING IT BACK TO ME.
WHAT'S THE FUN IN THAT?
WELL, IF YOU REALLY HUSTLE, I'LL PAT YOU ON THE HEAD AND SAY "GOOD BOY!"
7-26

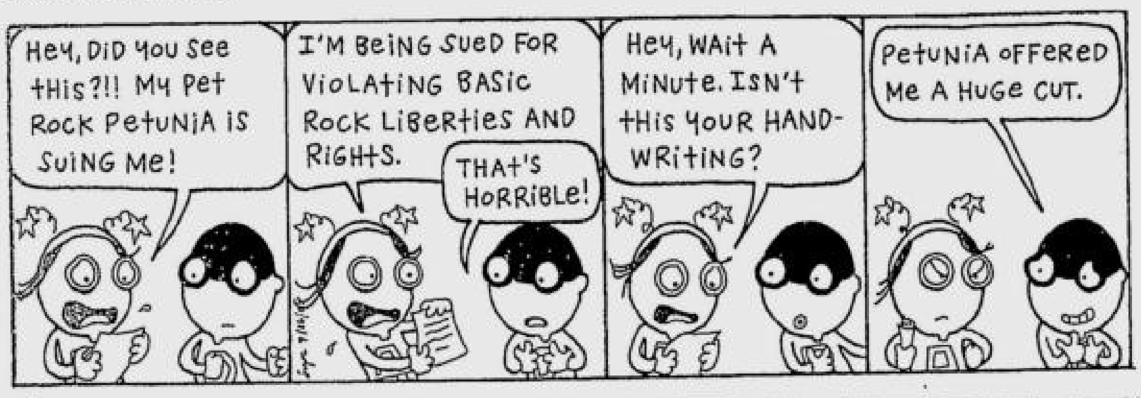
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


MOM SAYS WE'RE NOT ALLOWED TO SAY ANYTHING TO HER THAT STARTS WITH "I WANT," "WHERE'S MY," OR "I CAN'T" FOR THE REST OF THE DAY.
OKAY.
WAIT. EVERYTHING WE SAY TO HER STARTS LIKE THAT!
IT'S GONNA BE A LOOONNNGGG AFTERNOON.
KIRKMAN & SCOTT

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


Hey, DID you see this?!! My Pet Rock Petunia is Suing Me!
I'M Being Sued For Violating Basic Rock Liberties and Rights.
That's Horrible!
Hey, Wait A Minute. Isn't this your Hand-writing?
Petunia offered Me A Huge Cut.

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You're very talented. Not only are you creative, you're also very kind, sensitive and responsive to others. People respect you and follow your lead, because they know you're always willing to help someone who needs it. Others appreciate your talents more than you do! An exciting choice awaits you this year. Choose wisely. **Birthdate of: Kate Beckinsale, actress; Mick Jagger, musician; Kevin Spacey, actor.**

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): The Moon is in your sign today. This gives you lots of energy. It might make you a bit more emotional about things. Nevertheless, good luck can come your way!

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Try to get a bit of rest today and tomorrow. You need to restore and replenish yourself. Very soon you're going to be out there flying your colors (with lots of get-up-and-go)!

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Conversations with friends, particularly female friends, are rewarding today. Don't be surprised if you feel a bit competitive with someone. That's OK.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): You want to tell somebody important what you think about things. You see it as a personal challenge. It's OK to voice your opinions, but don't get into hot water. (You're not a tea bag.)

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): This is a strong day for you. The Moon is in Aries, and that is your fellow Fire sign. You want to do something different. You want a bit of adventure. Great—shake it up a little!

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): This is an excellent day to attend to bills, debt, insurance matters and anything involving shared property. You might disagree with someone about who is responsible for something. Be patient.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): The Moon opposes you today. That's why you feel like other people are opposing you! Remember—it takes two to make a fight. Have patience.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): You have tons of energy to work today. You can accomplish a lot at your job. You might also want to work out in a physical sense to improve your health.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): This is a fun-filled, flirtatious day for your sign. Professional sports, especially competitive sports, will appeal to you.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Be patient with parents and family members today. Conversations could be challenging. Don't let things deteriorate to a win/lose level. Keep it on a win/win plane.

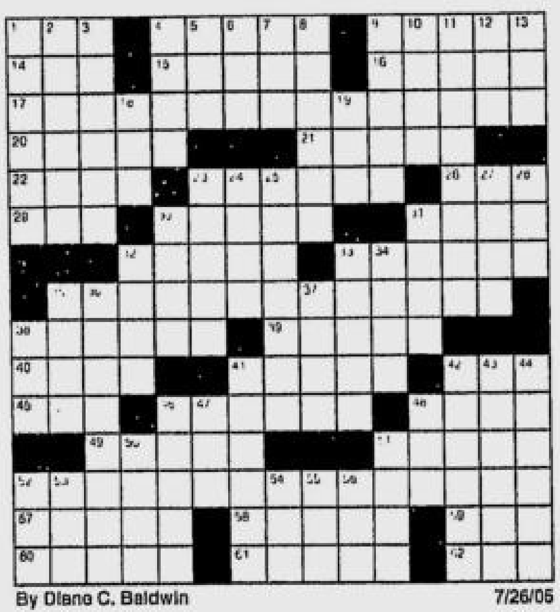
AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): You feel very bold about telling others what you think today. In fact, it gives you a bit of a thrill to see that your words shock some people.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Think twice before you spend money today. It's not a bad day to shop, but you might spend money very impulsively now.

DAILY CROSSWORD

THE Daily Crossword

Edited by Wayne Robert Williams



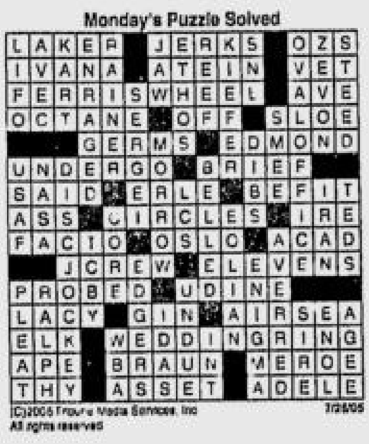
By Diane C. Baldwin
Columbia, MD

7/26/05

ACROSS
1 Cleopatra's undoing
4 Tarzan's Cheetah
9 Asian peninsula
14 Sticky stuff
15 Sound system
16 More than well-rounded?
17 Prioritizing remark
20 Book of maps
21 Linguine or ziti
22 Rid oneself of
23 Live
26 Fall behind
29 Decimal base
30 Part of USAF
31 Grain tower
32 Throat tickle response
33 Soaked to the skin
35 Half-hearted assurance
38 Go around
39 On the up and up
40 In a bit
41 Digs in one's heels
42 Lout
45 Argon or neon
46 Oyster creations
48 Faithful
49 Trunk
51 Obie or Edgar
52 Delaying words
57 Visionaries
58 Be in store
59 Tolkien baddie
60 Exodus leader
61 Pliable
62 Natalie Cole's father

DOWN
1 Horror-stricken
2 Calm down
3 Hay fever's cause
4 "Memory" musical
5 What say?
6 Lupino or Tarbell
7 Cambridge sch.
8 Pastry-topped dish
9 Bullwinkle, e.g.
10 Be adjacent to
11 Strict conformity to law
12 Fire flakes
13 Up to now
18 Family man
19 I've __ it with you!
23 Rakes
24 Work units
25 Learned one
27 On the less windy side
28 Figure of worship
30 Watch guards
31 Spades or clubs
32 Bluish green
33 Sets of cards
34 Elevator name
35 Talking bird
36 New Testament twelve
37 "The __ on the Floss"
38 Caddie's carry
41 Tree with a huge trunk
42 Wax drawing stick
43 __ borealis
44 Take off
46 Fourth estate
47 Ballpark fig.
48 Tango number
50 Grimm creature
51 ABA member
52 School of thought
53 August sign
54 Wonderment
55 No __ do
56 Young goat

Monday's Puzzle Solved



L	A	K	E	R	■	J	E	R	K	S	■	O	Z	S
I	V	A	N	A	■	A	T	E	I	N	■	V	E	T
F	E	R	R	I	S	W	H	E	E	L	■	A	V	E
O	C	T	A	N	E	■	O	F	F	■	S	L	O	E
■	■	■	G	E	R	M	S	■	E	D	M	O	N	D
U	N	D	E	R	G	O	■	B	R	I	E	F	■	■
S	A	I	D	■	E	R	L	E	■	B	E	F	I	T
A	S	S	■	C	I	R	C	L	E	S	■	I	R	E
F	A	C	T	O	■	O	S	L	O	■	A	C	A	D
■	■	J	C	R	E	W	■	E	L	E	V	E	N	S
P	R	O	B	E	D	■	U	D	I	N	E	■	■	■
L	A	C	Y	■	G	I	N	■	A	I	R	S	E	A
E	L	K	■	W	E	D	D	I	N	G	R	I	N	G
A	P	E	■	B	R	A	U	N	■	M	E	R	O	E
T	H	Y	■	A	S	S	E	T	■	A	D	E	L	E

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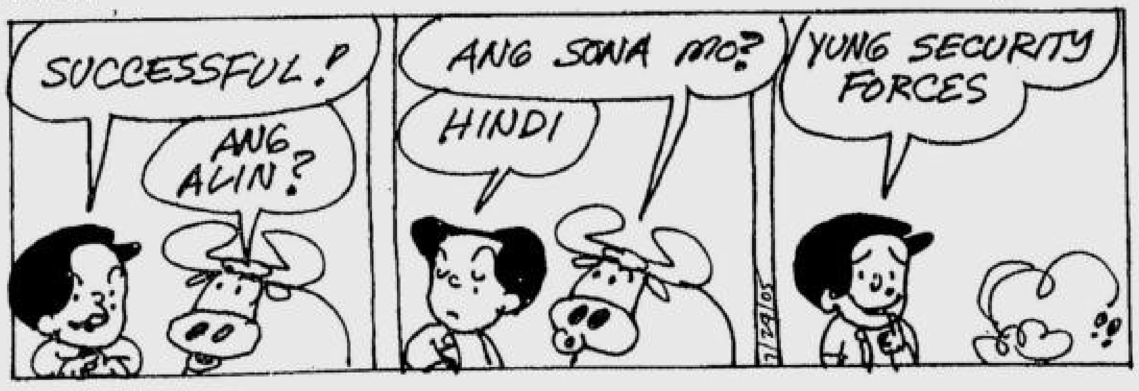
7/25/05

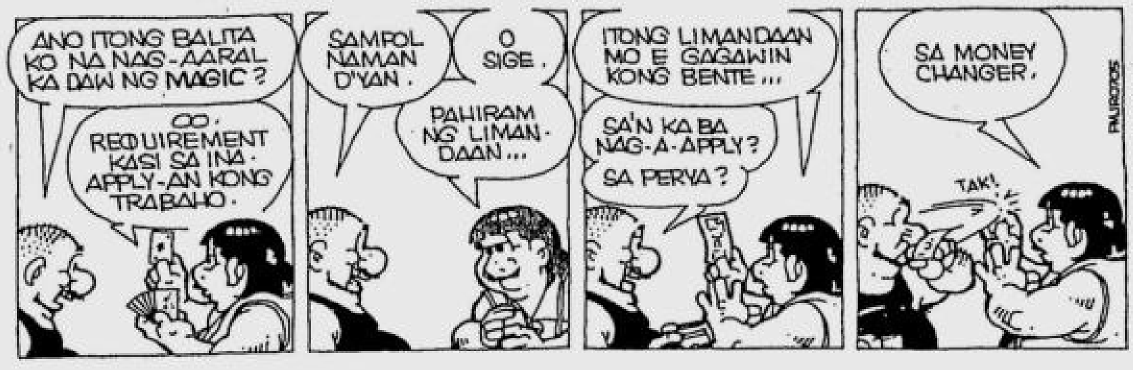
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


SUCCESSFUL!?
ANG ALIN?
ANG SONA MO?
HINDI
YUNG SECURITY FORCES
7/24/05

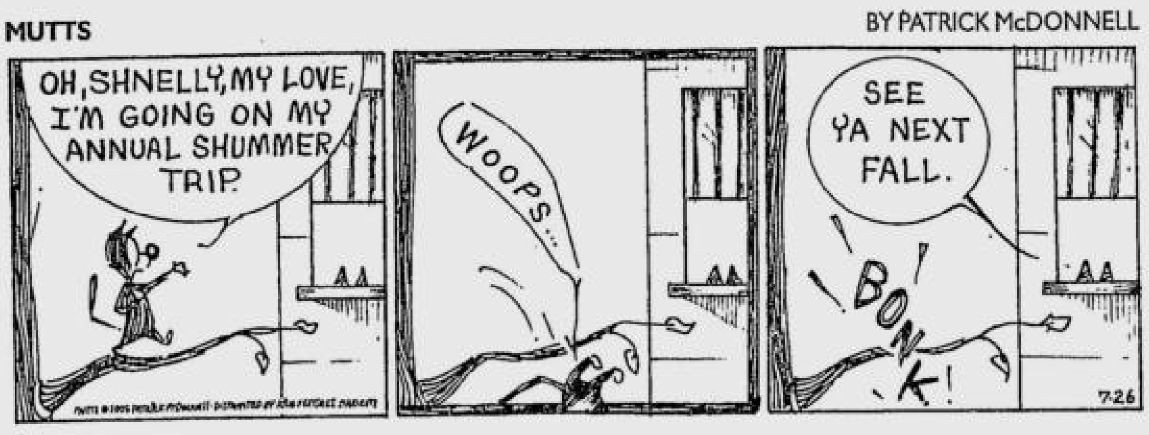
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


ANO ITONG BALITA KO NA NAG-AARAL KA DAW NG MAGIC?
OO. REQUIREMENT KASI SA INA-APPLY-AN KONG TRABAHO.
SAMPOL NAMAN D'YAN.
O SIGE.
PAHIRAM NG LIMAN-DAAN...
ITONG LIMANDAAN MO E GAGAWIN KONG BENTE...
SA'N KA BA NAG-A-APPLY?
SA PERYA?
SA MONEY CHANGER.
TAK!

MUTTS

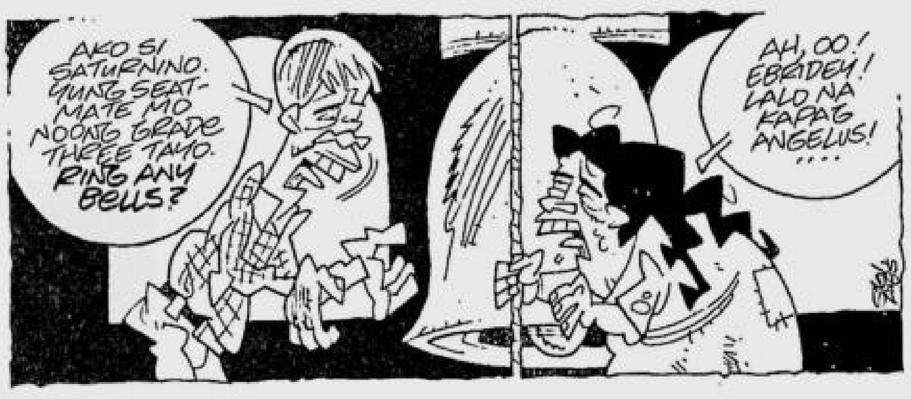
BY PATRICK McDONNELL


OH, SHNELLY, MY LOVE, I'M GOING ON MY ANNUAL SHUMMER TRIP.
WOOPS...
SEE YA NEXT FALL.
BONK!
7-26

DIVINE COMEDY

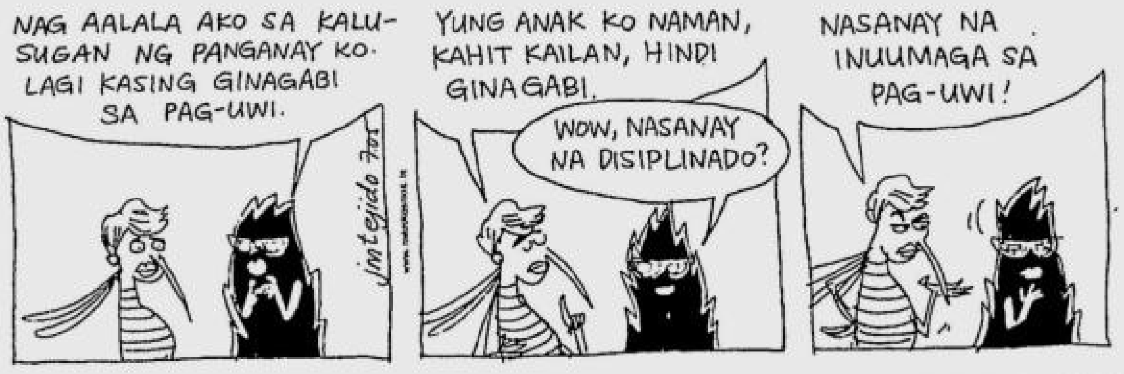
BY STEVEN PABALINAS

MAY ISANG HINDI INAASAHANG BISITA NA DUMALAW SA KAMPANERANG KUBA


AKO SI SATURNINO. YUNG SEAT-MATE MO NOONG GRADE THREE TAYO. RING ANY BELLS?
AH, OO! EBRIDEY! LALO NA KAPAG ANGELUS!

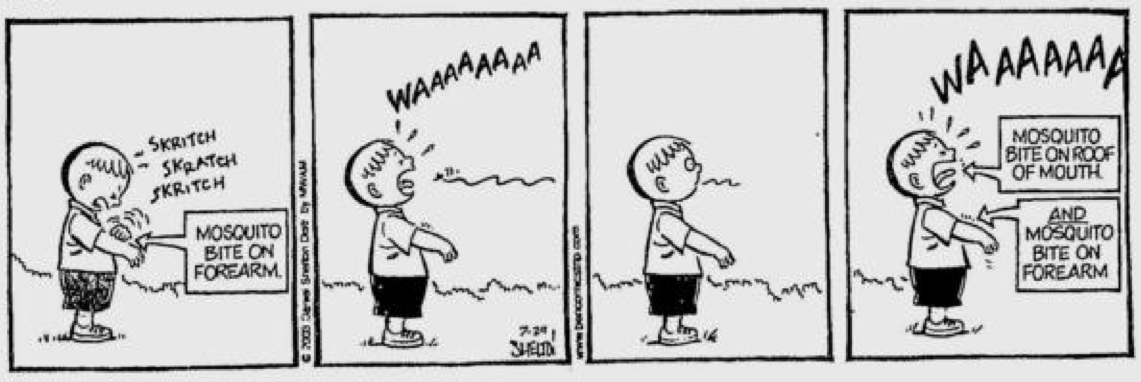
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


NAG AALALA AKO SA KALUSUGAN NG PANGANAY KO. LAGI KASING GINAGABI SA PAG-UWI.
YUNG ANAK KO NAMAN, KAHIT KAILAN, HINDI GINAGABI.
WOW, NASANAY NA DISIPLINADO?
NASANAY NA INUUMAGA SA PAG-UWI!

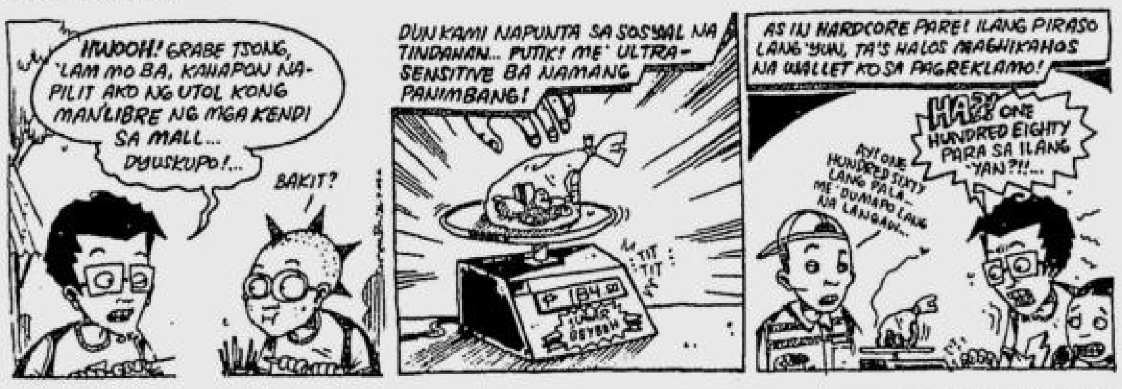
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


SKRITCH SKRATCH SKRITCH
MOSQUITO BITE ON FOREARM.
WAAAAAAAA
MOSQUITO BITE ON ROOF OF MOUTH.
AND MOSQUITO BITE ON FOREARM
WAAAAAAA

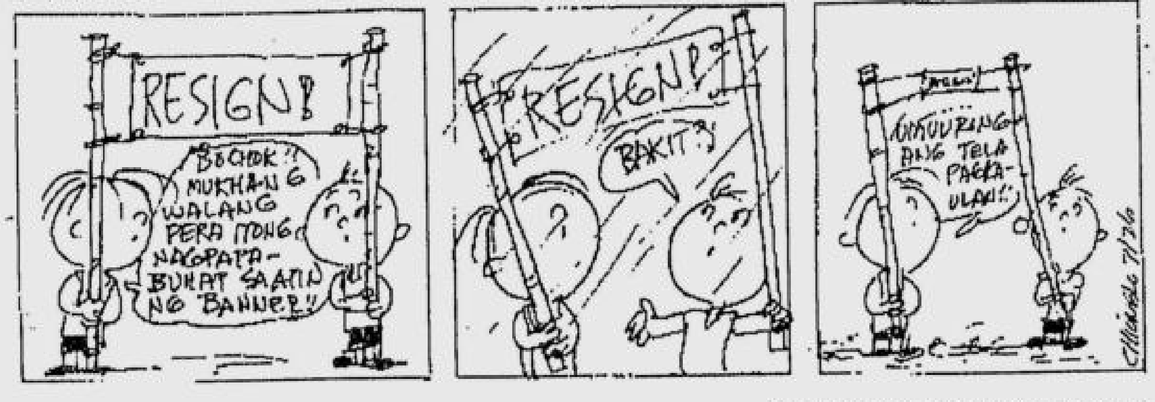
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


HWOOH! GRABE TSONG, 'LAM MO BA, KAHAPON NAPILIT AKO NG UTOL KONG MANLIBRE NG MGA KENDI SA MALL... DYUSKUPO!...
BAKIT?
DUN KAMI NAPUNTA SA SOSYAL NA TINDAHAN... PUTIK! ME' ULTRA-SENSITIVE BA NAMANG PANIMBANG!
AS IN HARDCORE PARE! ILANG PIRASO LANG 'YUN, TA'S HALOS MAGHIKAHOS NA WALLET KO SA PAGREKLAMO!
HA?! ONE HUNDRED EIGHTY PARA SA ILANG 'YAN?!!...
AY! ONE HUNDRED SIXTY LANG PALA, ME' DUMAPO LANG NA LANGAW...

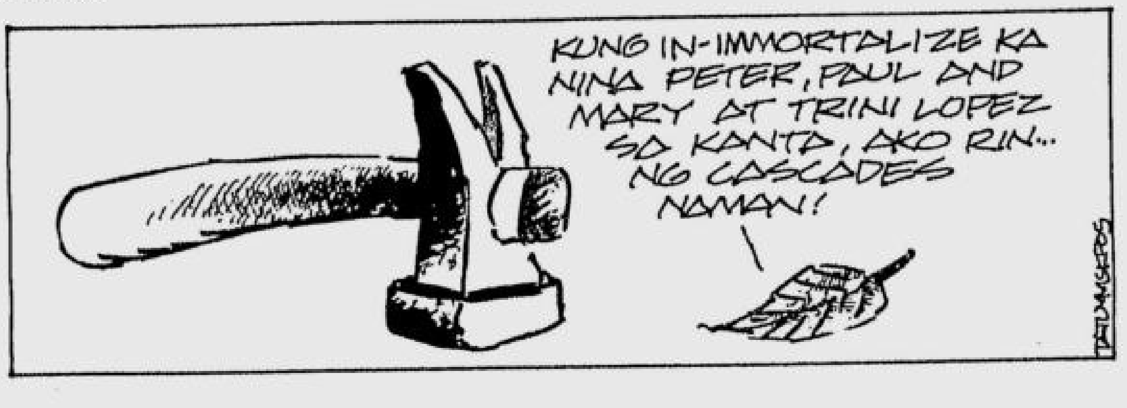
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


RESIGN!
BOCHOK!? MUKHANG WALANG PERA ITONG NAGPAPABUHAT SA ATIN NG BANNER!!
RESIGN!?
BAKIT?!
UMUURONG ANG TELA PAGKA-ULAN!!
7/26

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


KUNG IN-IMMORTALIZE KA NINA PETER, PAUL AND MARY AT TRINI LOPEZ SA KANTA, AKO RIN... NG CASCADES NAMAN!

Troy Montero's staying power

Text, styling and direction by Larry Leviste
Photos by Romy Homillada
COUTURE MENSWEAR BY GERRY KATIGBAK
GROOMING BY DIERIE ORTIZ

TROY Montero, handsome hunk, product endorser, movie actor and celebrity with staying power, has just taken on a new role—as rock 'n' roll singer.

After "Rappin' and Rockin,'" a debut concert with brother KC at Ratsky Morato, Troy went on a series of musical concerts abroad with Ai-Ai de las Alas last May.

"I couldn't believe the reception! From Chicago to San Francisco, Las Vegas, Honolulu and Maui, the show was sold out," Troy told INQUIRER Entertainment.

Lately, Troy's been in the news for his rumored uncoupling with actress Aubrey Miles. "We're giving each other some space," was all Troy would say. "She taught me that a relationship is a partnership, not ownership. I'm the jealous type *kasi.*"

Cody Miller (his real name) was born and raised in Seattle, Washington, the eldest of three boys. His brothers, KC and Colby, have become celebrities, too.

Troy worked in his dad's real estate business and modeled for Sears catalogues. At the time, he also had a garage rock band.

His brother KC made five trips to Zambales, tracing the family roots and bonding with their grandparents. Their *lola* told Troy to try making it in Manila.

"I was nagged, and finally convinced. Manila seemed like another world. I had culture shock. When I landed a Levi's ad with the help of Don Don Monteverde, I decided to stay."

One night in a club, dancer-choreogapher Maribeth Bichara spotted him. "The following week, I was a host on ABS CBN's 'Keep On Dancing' with Charlene Gonzalez."

Now he has six movies under his belt. He's appeared on television for nine years now—including stints as lifestyle program host for two networks. In the end, Troy found his true passion—recording, composing and singing.

His first CD, "Special Memories," a compilation of hits from the '70s and '80s, was launched six months ago.

For this exclusive pictorial, Troy wears superb designs for men by Gerry Katigbak.

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2 FANTASTIC FOUR
3 (DTS) THE ISLAND
4 BALAHIBONG PUSA
5 NEW POLICE STORY

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6 FANTASTIC FOUR

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 (DOLBY EX) THE ISLAND
2 FANTASTIC FOUR
3 (DTS ES) SIN CITY
4 HERBIE FULLY LOADED

Cine Nepo
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.0121
1 SIN CITY
2 FANTASTIC FOUR
3 (DOLBY) HERBIE FULLY LOADED
4 (DTS) THE ISLAND

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 TAGOS SA LAMAN
2 THE ISLAND
3 MONSTER IN LAW
4 PINOY BLONDE

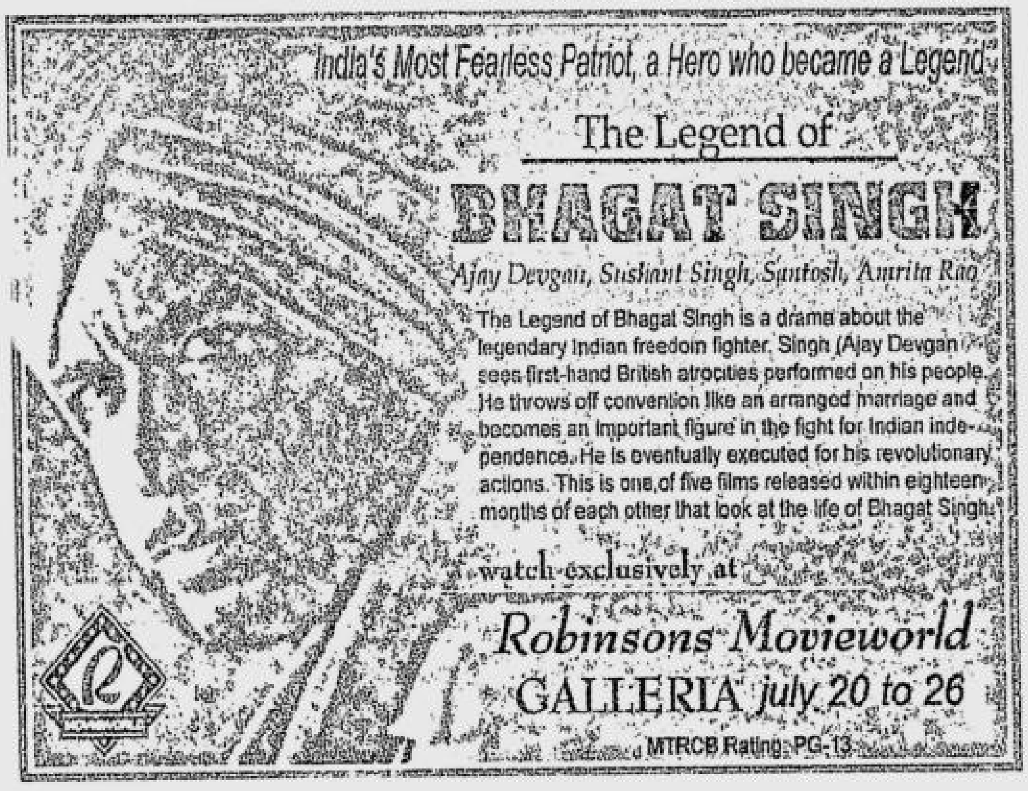
Cine Nepo
(Dagupan City) tel (075) 515.8409
1 PINOY BLONDE
2 CREEP
3 (DOLBY) FANTASTIC FOUR
4 (DTS) WAR OF THE WORLDS

starmall Movies
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(LAS PINAS) tel. 8735004
1 (DOLBY) SIX
2 RESERVED

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 WAR OF THE WORLDS
2 THE ISLAND

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029
1 EVIL DEAD
2 KAULAYAW

MOVIES / SCHEDULES / PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE



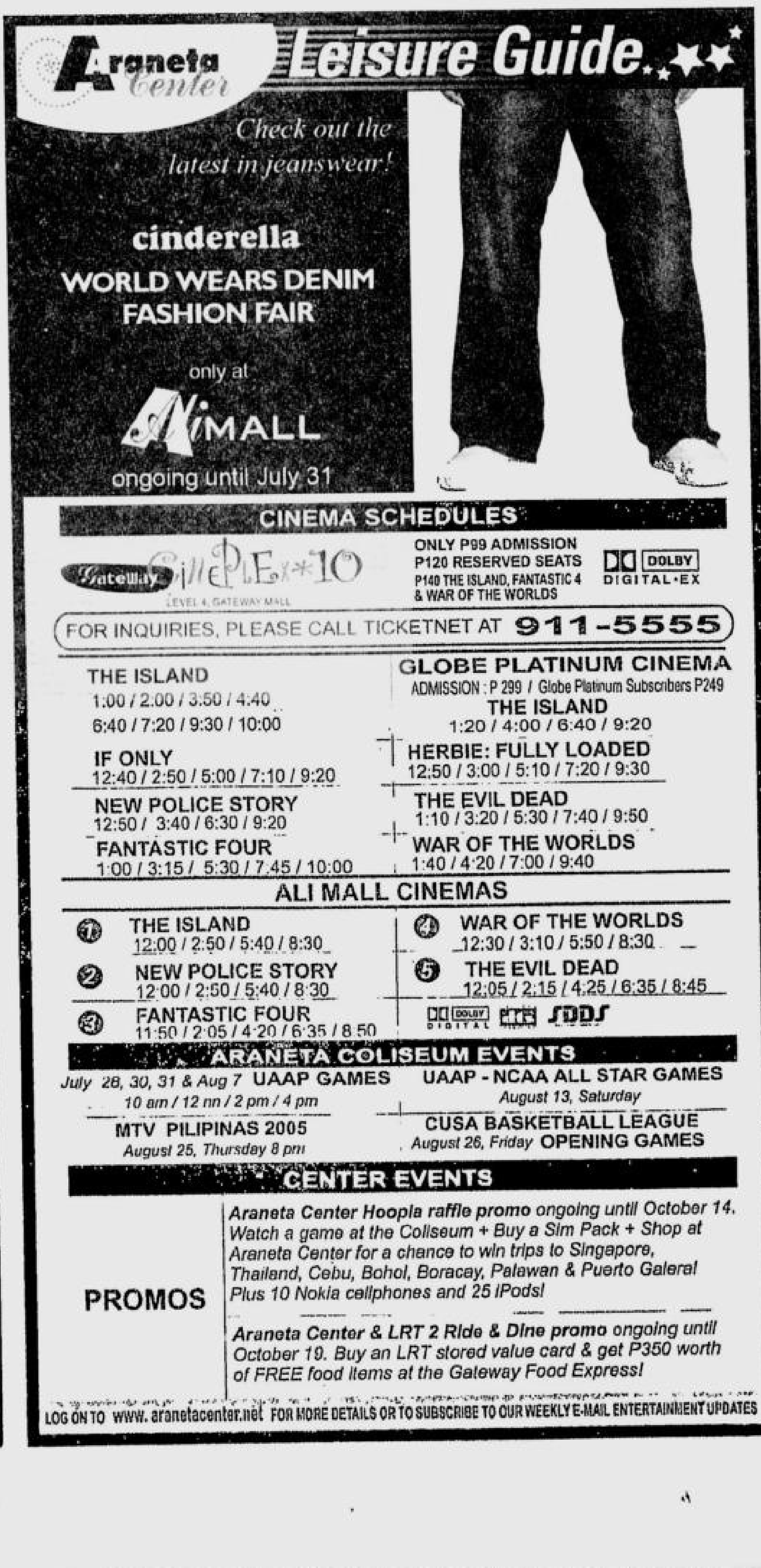
India's Most Fearless Patriot, a Hero who became a Legend

The Legend of BHAGAT SINGH

Ajay Devgan, Sushant Singh, Santosh, Amrita Rao

The Legend of Bhagat Singh is a drama about the legendary Indian freedom fighter. Singh (Ajay Devgan) sees first-hand British atrocities performed on his people. He throws off convention like an arranged marriage and becomes an important figure in the fight for Indian independence. He is eventually executed for his revolutionary actions. This is one of five films released within eighteen months of each other that look at the life of Bhagat Singh.

watch exclusively at
Robinsons Movieworld
GALLERIA july 20 to 26
MTRCB Rating: PG-13



Araneta Center Leisure Guide

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CINEMA SCHEDULES

Gateway CINEPLEX 10
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ONLY P99 ADMISSION
P120 RESERVED SEATS
P140 THE ISLAND, FANTASTIC 4 & WAR OF THE WORLDS
DOLBY DIGITAL-EX

FOR INQUIRIES, PLEASE CALL TICKETNET AT 911-5555

THE ISLAND
1:00 / 2:00 / 3:50 / 4:40
6:40 / 7:20 / 9:30 / 10:00
IF ONLY
12:40 / 2:50 / 5:00 / 7:10 / 9:20
NEW POLICE STORY
12:50 / 3:40 / 6:30 / 9:20
FANTASTIC FOUR
1:00 / 3:15 / 5:30 / 7:45 / 10:00

GLOBE PLATINUM CINEMA
ADMISSION : P 299 / Globe Platinum Subscribers P249
THE ISLAND
1:20 / 4:00 / 6:40 / 9:20
HERBIE: FULLY LOADED
12:50 / 3:00 / 5:10 / 7:20 / 9:30
THE EVIL DEAD
1:10 / 3:20 / 5:30 / 7:40 / 9:50
WAR OF THE WORLDS
1:40 / 4:20 / 7:00 / 9:40

ALI MALL CINEMAS
① THE ISLAND
12:00 / 2:50 / 5:40 / 8:30
② NEW POLICE STORY
12:00 / 2:50 / 5:40 / 8:30
③ FANTASTIC FOUR
11:50 / 2:05 / 4:20 / 6:35 / 8:50
④ WAR OF THE WORLDS
12:30 / 3:10 / 5:50 / 8:30
⑤ THE EVIL DEAD
12:05 / 2:15 / 4:25 / 6:35 / 8:45

ARANETA COLISEUM EVENTS
July 28, 30, 31 & Aug 7 UAAP GAMES
10 am / 12 nn / 2 pm / 4 pm
MTV PILIPINAS 2005
August 25, Thursday 8 pm
UAAP - NCAA ALL STAR GAMES
August 13, Saturday
CUSA BASKETBALL LEAGUE
August 26, Friday OPENING GAMES

CENTER EVENTS
PROMOS
***Araneta Center Hoopla raffle promo** ongoing until October 14. Watch a game at the Coliseum + Buy a Sim Pack + Shop at Araneta Center for a chance to win trips to Singapore, Thailand, Cebu, Bohol, Boracay, Palawan & Puerto Galera! Plus 10 Nokia cellphones and 25 iPods!*

***Araneta Center & LRT 2 Ride & Dine promo** ongoing until October 19. Buy an LRT stored value card & get P350 worth of FREE food items at the Gateway Food Express!*

LOG ON TO www.aranetacenter.net FOR MORE DETAILS OR TO SUBSCRIBE TO OUR WEEKLY E-MAIL ENTERTAINMENT UPDATES

Show biz…

From page A30

in the QC area, Venue 108, will have a week-long first anniversary celebration from Aug. 1-7. The highlight of the affair is the band jam and the "Naughty and Wild dance contest" championship match. Come join the party people at Venue (on Timog Avenue). Get lost in the music as you savor its sumptuous dishes (I can't have enough of their chili chicken and sizzling corn!). Thanks to **Ricardo Chang, Nelson** and **Liezl** for making me feel at home at Venue 108 all the time

For feedback: E-mail *wateringhole-shangrila@yahoo.com* or *dollyanne@true-faithband.com*

Mark Meily

From page A32

nomenon in the country," he said. "In the '80s, it was the super 8 and now it's digital technology, which has democratized filmmaking."

Meily cautioned, however, that "digital technology would not make directors out of everyone."

Because what separates the amateur from the pro is fluency in film language and grammar.

This is the service provided by film schools like APFI and the International Academy of Film and Television in Cebu, the workshops conducted by filmmaker Peque Gallaga in Negros, and the regular courses in UP, Ateneo, De La Salle, and the Mowelfund.

Renowned director Maryo J. de los Reyes also had plans of going back to teaching in UP Diliman.

Meily will return to teaching at the APFI in January or February next year.

"The growth of film education is astounding," he waxed optimistic. "The future of Philippine cinema gets brighter and brighter."

Big boost for books and reading

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

THE "DYING" activity of reading got a big boost recently with the record-breaking release of JK Rowling's latest Harry Potter book, "Harry Potter and the Half-Blood Prince." The previous book, "Order of the Phoenix," sold 5 million copies in 24 hours in the US.

The new book sold a stunning 6.9 million copies!

The enormous success of the Harry Potter series has energized the publishing scene, and made avid readers out of millions of young people, some of whom used to think that reading was for nerds and losers.

We trust that these new converts to the fascination of the written word will go on to read other books as well, to open up their minds and hearts to other writers' worlds of wonder.

As for adult readers, they are being well-served by Oprah Winfrey's reinvigorated Book Club, which has reintroduced them to the power and beauty of masterworks like John Steinbeck's "Of Mice and Men."

In the Philippines, reading needs to be similarly boosted, so we hope that some local celebrities or prime movers use their clout with the public to promote reading, especially among the youth.

Yes, we get the occasional storytelling session and neighborhood book club, but bigger and more visible initiatives are needed to really make a dent on the public's consciousness.

Finally, we hope that the huge business that the latest Harry Potter book is generating will encourage a Filipino writer to also come up with an imaginative book for young readers here, and that it will be so good that it will similarly set records.

> J. K. Rowling's sixth Harry Potter book makes history selling 6.9 million copies in 24 hours in the US

Tricks of the trade

IN THE "user-friendly" world of show business, it isn't unusual for new talents to try to get noticed by picking a fight with an established star.

Most stars know better than to respond, but when starlets keep needling them, they sometimes answer in kind, and thus inadvertently give the starlets, the notoriety they've been gunning for.

To take full advantage of the media attention generated by the stars' tirades, the starlets then go on "pity me" mode, crying that they've been unfairly accused by the aggrieved stars, whom they profess to love and admire to bits.

Since the local audience loves underdogs, the "vicious" stars end up as the villains in this manufactured teapot tempest, and the startlets earn more "*paawa* points" as their "victims."

(So, please, don't forget to buy their latest albums, or catch their upcoming concerts.)

Some months ago, a big singing star was at the receiving end of such a cynical starmaking campaign. To her credit, she kept her irritation in check for the most part—but she eventually blew her top and bristled at being so cheaply used to further a new singer's career.

Expectedly, the new singer reacted with the standard pious protestations of innocence and hurt feelings, but the harm was done. We trust that other stars will learn from the established singer's experience, and avoid being so shabbily used in subsequent encounters with ambitious little starlets with peso signs dancing before their eyes.

'One Missed Call, 2'

BUENA Vista Int'l announced its acquisition of "One Missed Call, 2," the blood-curdling sequel to the hit 2004 thriller. The new blockbuster, which recently broke box-office records in Tokyo, casts some of Japan's hottest stars—**Yu Yoshizawa, Mimula, Renji Ishibashi, Haruko Wanibuchi** and **Asaka Seto.** Making his motion picture directing debut is **Rempei Tsukamoto**, who has megged many hit "japanovelas."

'Something's Gotta Give'

AT 8 p.m on July 31, HBO screens the Oscar-nominated film, "Something's Gotta Give," with Jack Nicholson playing an aging music mogul with a reputation for dating younger women. But chance encounters lead to his finally falling for a mature woman—the mother (Diane Keaton) of the girl he's dating.

Movies on TV

ON HBO, July 26 at 11:20 a.m., "Changing Lanes." 8:25 p.m., "Legends of the Fall." 10 p.m., "Normal." On Cinemax, July 26 at 6:30 a.m.; "Fahrenheit 451." 9 p.m., "Two Weeks Notice." 12:15 a.m., "Live Nude Girls."

'Florante at Laura'

GANTIMPALA Theater Foundation's "Florante at Laura" is being performed until Aug. 13. Schedule: July 26, 10 a.m. and 2 p.m., at Assumpta Theater, Assumption College Antipolo. July 29, 20 and 31, AFP Theater, AC. Aug. 5, 6, 7, St. Cecilia's Hall, St. Scholastica's College, Manila. Aug. 11, De La Salle-Santiago Zobel, Muntinlupa City. Aug. 13, RFC Cinema Theater, Las Piñas City. Call 899-5745.

Show biz version of the Sona

From page A32

the rock opera "Jesus Christ Superstar," will the superstar be able to pinpoint the Judas Escariot in her midst?

Trapped or back together?

IS IT TRUE that after their much ballyhooed annulment case, **Diether Ocampo** and **Kristine Hermosa** are back in each other's arms? There were lots of raised eyebrows when Kristine suddenly announced that she's seeking nullity of their marriage because, in the first place, they never admitted that they got hitched. An insider said that it was just a ploy so that Kristine's team-up with **TJ Trinidad** in a soap would click. My source also insisted that Diet and Tin-tin had to resort to that to heat things up in their lukewarm careers. Are they now trapped in a web of tales of their own creation?

'Wish Ko Lang' anniversary

GMA'S groundbreaking reality show "Wish Ko Lang" has been the unbeatable ratings leader in the 4 p.m. Saturday time slot for three straight years. With so much to be thankful for, the show celebrates its third anniversary this July with a bang!

In its grandest anniversary special yet, "Wish Ko Lang!" has chosen three lucky families, one of which will win a fully furnished house and lot in Laguna worth P1 million. The two other families will receive livelihood showcases of either a mini grocery or a *carinderia* worth P150,000 each.

Viewers get a chance to vote for one of these families by typing WISHKOLANG and letter A for matchbox, B for raft, or C for plywood house and then sending it to 2364 for Globe, 2344 for Sun Cellular and 367 for Smart and Talk 'N Text. One lucky texter will receive P50,000 in cash for joining the text promo.

The winning family will be announced by 'Wish Ko Lang' host **Vicky Morales** during the second part of the anniversary special which will be aired on July 30.

Venue turns one

MY FAVE hangout (where I let it all hang out!)

SHOW/ A29

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1	THE ISLAND	PG13	12:35, 3:30, 6:25, 9:20
2	IF ONLY	PG13	11:30, 1:40, 3:50, 6:00, 8:10, 10:20

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NOW SHOWING

Cinema	Film	Rating	Times
3	HERBIE	GP	11:40, 2:20, 5:00, 7:40, 10:20
4	THE ISLAND	PG13	11:20, 2:15, 5:10, 8:05
5	THE ISLAND	PG13	10:40, 1:35, 4:30, 7:25, 10:20

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SHANG CINEPLEX

1 THE ISLAND
MTRCB PG-13
12 45, 3.50, 6 55, 10 00 LMF

2 HERBIE FULLY LOADED
MTRCB GP
11 50, 2 20, 4 50, 7 20, 9 50 LMF

3 IF ONLY
MTRCB PG-13
11 35, 2 00, 4 25, 6 50, 9 15

4 FANTASTIC FOUR
MTRCB GP
12 20, 2 45, 5:10, 7.35, 10.00

PREMIERE THEATRE THE ISLAND
MTRCB PG-13 11 45 2 50 5 55 9 00 LMF
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Cinema	Film	Times	Rating
1	FANTASTIC FOUR	11:40, 2:20, 5:00 7:40, 10:20	GP
2	THE ISLAND	10:20, 1:20, 4:25 7:30, 10:50	PG-13
3	THE ISLAND	12:50, 3:55, 7:00, 10:05	PG-13
4	HERBIE FULLY LOADED	12:55, 3:25, 5:55 8:25, 10:50	GP

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DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

THE ISLAND PG13 12:15,3:05,5:55,8:45	THE ISLAND GP 1:00,3:50,6:40,9:30	HERBIE: FULLY LOADED GP 12:50,3:10,5:30, 7:50,10:10
FANTASTIC FOUR GP 12:40,3:00,5:20, 7:40,10:00	IF ONLY PG13 1:25,3:35,5:45, 7:55,10:05	THE ISLAND PG13 1:25,3:35,5:45, 7:55,10:05

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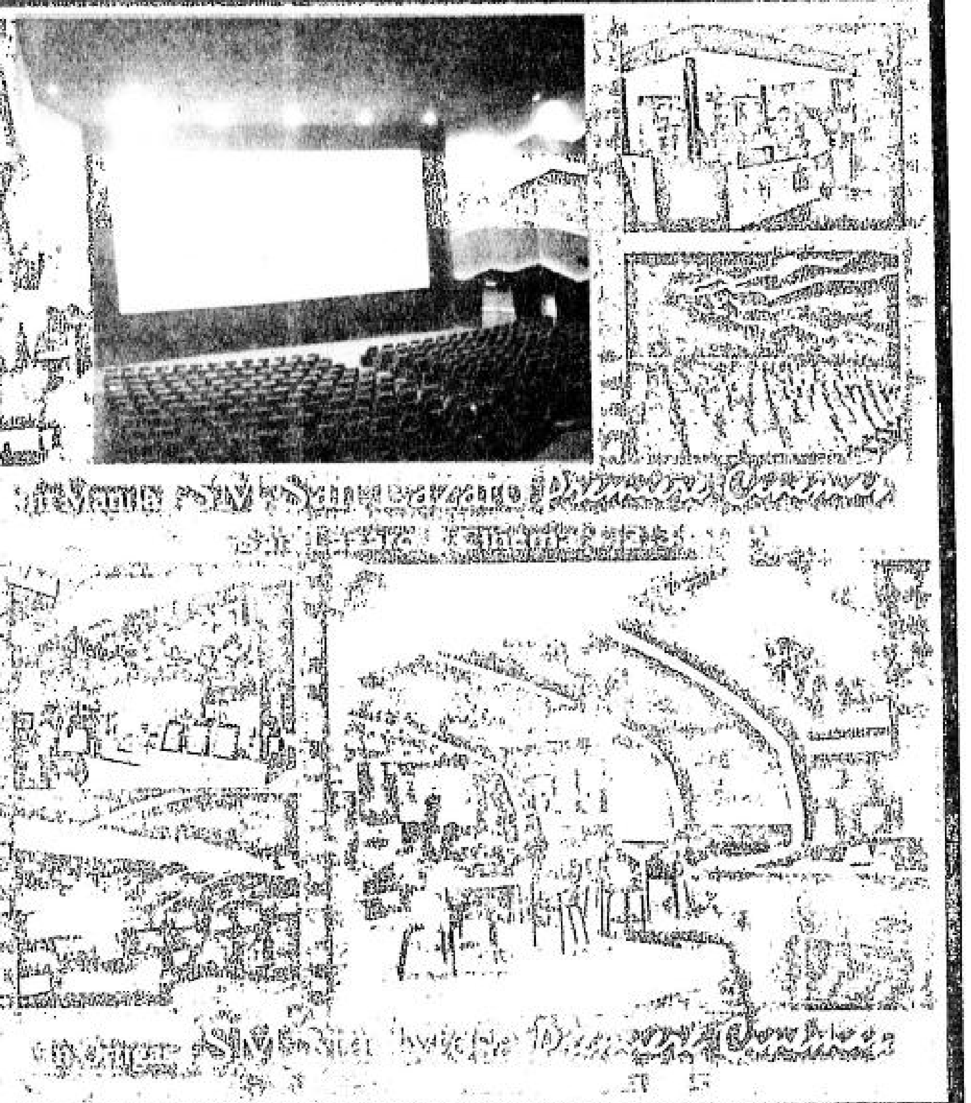

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FOR GUARANTEED SEATS

the podium 633-8976
IF ONLY
11:50FS/12:20MF/02:30/04:40/06:50
08:25LFS/09:00LMF/10:35END
THE ISLAND
12:15FS/12:45MF/03:30/06:15
08:30LFS/09:00LMF/11:15END

cebu (032) 231-3876
WAR OF THE WORLDS
11:40FS/11:50MF/02:15/04:40/07:05
09:05LFS/09:30LMF/11:30END
THE ISLAND
11:10FS/11:15MF/01:45/04:20/06:55
09:10LFS/09:30LMF/11:45END
FANTASTIC FOUR
11:50FS/12:00MF/01:54/03:48/05:42/07:36
09:23LFS/09:30LFS/11:20END

METRO MANILA

SM MEGAMALL
CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
2 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
THE ISLAND
5 FANTASTIC FOUR
WAR OF THE WORLDS
HERBIE: FULLY LOADED
CAMPUS GHOST STORY
NEW POLICE STORY
THE ISLAND
11 EVIL DEAD
IF ONLY

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
MR. & MRS. SMITH
PINOY BLONDE
CREEP
FANTASTIC FOUR
NEW POLICE STORY
WAR OF THE WORLDS
THE ISLAND
HERBIE: FULLY LOADED
IF ONLY
CAMPUS GHOST STORY
11 BATMAN BEGINS
12 EVIL DEAD

SM NORTH EDSA
1 FANTASTIC FOUR
2 THE ISLAND
IF ONLY
4 HERBIE: FULLY LOADED
NEW POLICE STORY
6 WAR OF THE WORLDS
CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
8 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION

SM CITY STA MESA
THE ISLAND
WAR OF THE WORLDS
FANTASTIC FOUR
NEW POLICE STORY
IF ONLY
ICE PRINCESS
HERBIE: FULLY LOADED
CAMPUS GHOST STORY
BATMAN BEGINS
EVIL DEAD

SM CITY SOUTHMALL
1 THE ISLAND
NEW POLICE STORY
3 THE ISLAND
FANTASTIC FOUR
CAMPUS GHOST STORY
6 MR. & MRS. SMITH
IF ONLY
HERBIE: FULLY LOADED
9 WAR OF THE WORLDS
10 EVIL DEAD

SM CITY MANILA
FANTASTIC FOUR
NEW POLICE STORY
HERBIE: FULLY LOADED
THE ISLAND
WAR OF THE WORLDS
THE ISLAND
EVIL DEAD
MONSTER-IN-LAW
CAMPUS GHOST STORY
10 CREEP
11 MR. & MRS. SMITH
12 IF ONLY

SM SAN LAZARO
THE ISLAND
FANTASTIC FOUR
IF ONLY
EVIL DEAD
HERBIE: FULLY LOADED
NEW POLICE STORY

SM SUPERCENTER SUCAT
CAMPUS GHOST STORY
THE ISLAND
NEW POLICE STORY
FANTASTIC FOUR

SM CITY BICUTAN
THE ISLAND
2 NEW POLICE STORY
3 CAMPUS GHOST STORY
4 FANTASTIC FOUR

LUZON

SM CITY PAMPANGA
THE ISLAND
HERBIE: FULLY LOADED
FANTASTIC FOUR
4 WAR OF THE WORLDS
5 CAMPUS GHOST STORY
NEW POLICE STORY

SM CITY BACOOR
CREEP
HERBIE: FULLY LOADED
THE ISLAND
WAR OF THE WORLDS
FANTASTIC FOUR
6 NEW POLICE STORY
EVIL DEAD
MAN OF THE HOUSE

SM CITY DASMARINAS
1 THE ISLAND
2 CAMPUS GHOST STORY
3 NEW POLICE STORY
4 FANTASTIC FOUR

SM CITY LUCENA
SIN CITY
THE ISLAND
PINOY BLONDE
FANTASTIC FOUR

SM CITY BAGUIO
THE ISLAND
2 MONSTER-IN-LAW
HERBIE: FULLY LOADED
FANTASTIC FOUR

SM CITY MARILAO
NEW POLICE STORY
CAMPUS GHOST STORY
FANTASTIC FOUR
4 THE ISLAND

SM CITY BATANGAS
THE ISLAND
PINOY BLONDE
3 THE ISLAND
4 FANTASTIC FOUR

VISAYAS AND MINDANAO

SM CITY CEBU
WAR OF THE WORLDS
THE ISLAND
FANTASTIC FOUR
NEW POLICE STORY
ALONE IN THE DARK
6 HERBIE: FULLY LOADED
HICHHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY
8 THE ISLAND

SM CITY ILOILO
1 PINOY BLONDE
2 WAR OF THE WORLDS
3 SINE TOTOO
4 MONSTER-IN-LAW
5 FANTASTIC FOUR
6 THE ISLAND
7 RESERVED
8 LOVE ME IF YOU DARE

SM CITY DAVAO
THE ISLAND
HERBIE: FULLY LOADED
NEW POLICE STORY
WAR OF THE WORLDS
MONSTER-IN-LAW
6 FANTASTIC FOUR

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO
THE ISLAND
MONSTER-IN-LAW
FANTASTIC FOUR
4 THE ISLAND

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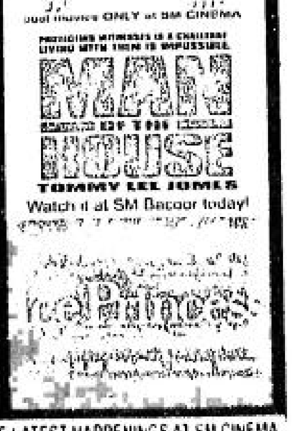

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GALLERIA 632-9115/16

1 THE ISLAND • THX
1:00 4:00 7:00 10:00

2 THE ISLAND
12:30 3:30 6:30 9:30

3 EVIL DEAD
12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00

4 FANTASTIC FOUR
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

5 NEW POLICE STORY
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

6 HERBIE: FULLY LOADED
12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50

7 MONSTER-IN-LAW
12:25 2:50 5:15 7:40 10:00

8 BHAGAT SINGH 1:00MF / 7:30 LMF
YAADEIN 4:00 MF

9 IF ONLY
12:20 2:45 5:10 7:35 10:00

10 WAR OF THE WORLDS
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

ERMITA 536-7809 to 12

1 THE ISLAND
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

2 EVIL DEAD
12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00

3 HERBIE: FULLY LOADED
12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00

4 SHANGHAI LILY
12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00

5 IF ONLY
12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00

6 FANTASTIC FOUR
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

7 NEW POLICE STORY
12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

METRO EAST 682-8193 • 682-8199

1 IF ONLY
2:10 4:30 6:50 9:10

2 HERBIE: FULLY LOADED
1:40 4:00 6:20 9:00

3 EVIL DEAD
12:50 2:50 4:50 6:50 9:00

4 WAR OF THE WORLDS
12:00 2:15 4:30 6:45 9:00

5 CAMPUS GHOST STORIES
1:40 4:00 6:20 9:00

6 FANTASTIC FOUR
12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00

7 THE ISLAND
1:00 4:00 7:00 10:00

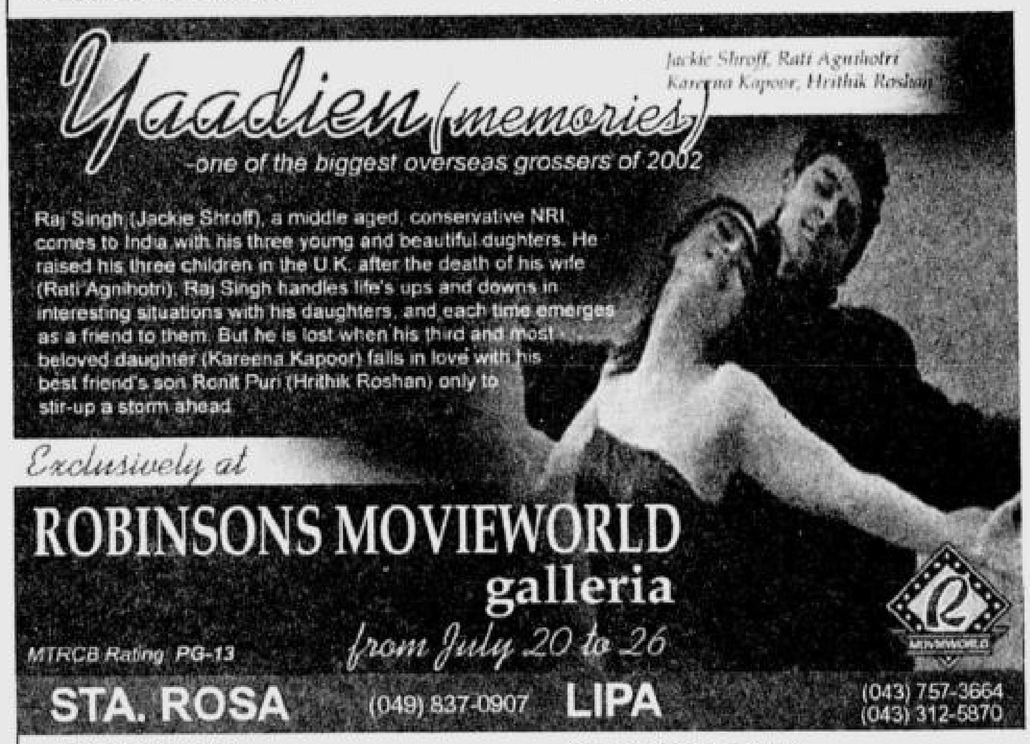
8 NEW POLICE STORY
1:10 3:40 6:20 9:00

CITISQUARE MALABON 288-2576

1 RING OF THE NIBELUNGS
2 THE ISLAND
3 FANTASTIC FOUR
4 IN GOOD COMPANY

PIONEER 687-6378

1 THE ISLAND
2 FANTASTIC FOUR
3 HERBIE: FULLY LOADED
4 IF ONLY



Yaadien (memories)

Jackie Shroff, Rati Agnihotri
Kareena Kapoor, Hrithik Roshan

-one of the biggest overseas grossers of 2002

Raj Singh (Jackie Shroff), a middle aged, conservative NRI comes to India with his three young and beautiful dughters. He raised his three children in the U.K. after the death of his wife (Rati Agnihotri). Raj Singh handles life's ups and downs in interesting situations with his daughters, and each time emerges as a friend to them. But he is lost when his third and most beloved daughter (Kareena Kapoor) falls in love with his best friend's son Ronit Puri (Hrithik Roshan) only to stir-up a storm ahead.

Exclusively at

ROBINSONS MOVIEWORLD
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MTRCB Rating PG-13

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1 THE ISLAND
2 CREEP
3 WAR OF THE WORLDS
4 HERBIE: FULLY LOADED
5 FANTASTIC FOUR

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1 FANTASTIC FOUR
2 THE ISLAND
3 MONSTER-IN-LAW
4 THE HITCHHIKER'S GUIDE TO THE GALAXY

DASMARIÑAS (046) 852-2125 (046) 416-4332

1 NEW POLICE STORY
2 CREEP
3 FANTASTIC FOUR
4 THE ISLAND

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1 THE ISLAND
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G1 GLORIETTA 1	1 EVIL DEAD	2 THE ISLAND	3 THE NEW POLICE STORY	4 FANTASTIC 4
G4 GLORIETTA 4	1 IF ONLY	2 FANTASTIC 4	3 THX THE ISLAND 11:10, 2:00, 4:50, 7:40, 10:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	
	4 WAR OF THE WORLDS	5 HERBIE: FULLY LOADED	6 THE ISLAND	7 THE ASSASSINATION OF RICHARD NIXON
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1 IF ONLY 1:05, 3:15, 5:25, 7:35, 9:45	2 THE ISLAND 1:15, 4:00, 6:45,9:30		
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX THE ISLAND 12:30, 3:15, 6:00, 8:45, 10:20 GUARANTEED SEATS	2 THX THE ISLAND 2:15, 5:00, 7:45, 11:30 GUARANTEED SEATS		
	3 HERBIE: FULLY LOADED 1:50, 4:00, 6:10, 8:20, 11:30 GUARANTEED SEATS	4 IF ONLY 2:35, 4:45, 6:55, 9:05, 11:15 GUARANTEED SEATS	5 FANTASTIC 4 1:45, 4:00, 6:15, 8:30, 10:45 GUARANTEED SEATS	
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX THE ISLAND	2 FANTASTIC 4		
	3 IF ONLY	4 THE ISLAND	5 HERBIE: FULLY LOADED	
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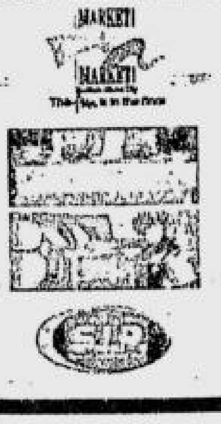

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Mark Meily goes back to school

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

INTERNATIONALLY acclaimed Filipino director Mark Meily went back to school last June—to teach Advanced Directing at the Asia-Pacific Film Institute (APFI) along Edsa.

Described as "phenomenal" by APFI Director of Studies Marilou Diaz-Abaya, Meily won awards for his debut film, "Crying Ladies," both here and abroad in 2003. Like his first movie, his second film, "La Visa Loca," earned an A from the Cinema Evaluation Board.

Now, it is time for Meily to share his knowledge, "to pay it forward," so to speak.

Meily's fellow instructors in the film school are some of the leading names in the industry: Nestor Torre (scriptwriting), Tara Illenberger (editing), Nonong Buencamino (music scoring), Mike Idioma (sound mixing), Johnny Delgado (acting), and Meily's wife, Lee Meily (cinematography).

INQUIRER Entertainment sat in one of Meily's lectures on "New Trends in Philippine Cinema"—which came after a screening of the APFI students' output which consisted of ten 1-minute short films, three commercials, and three 15-minute short films.

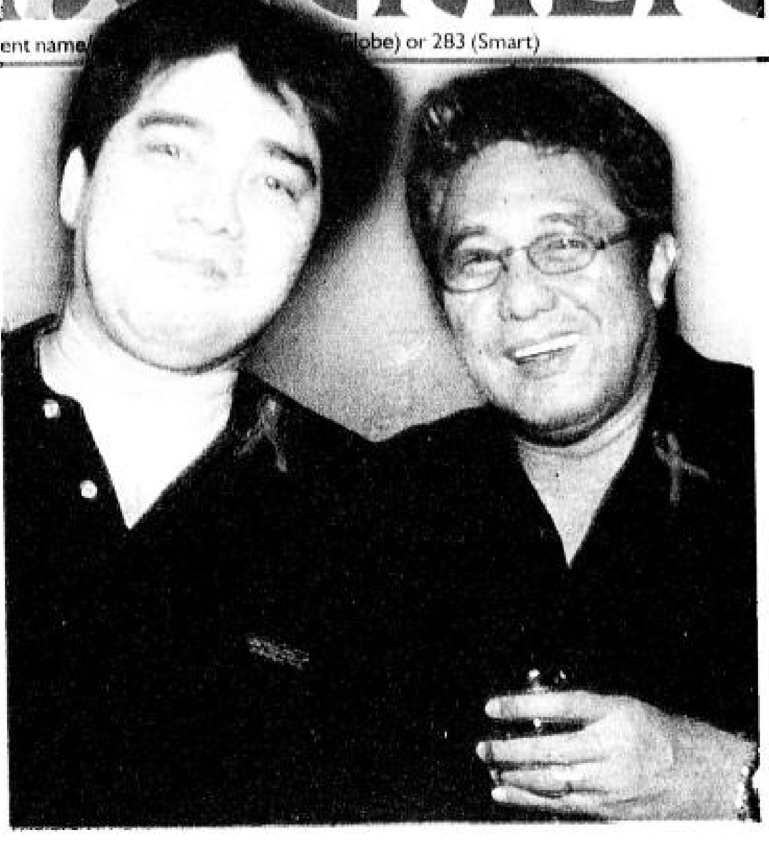
Meily was extremely supportive of the pupils—commending them for coming out with student films that could pass as "professional."

"The commercials could very well win in the next Ad Congress," he pointed out.

Now, the harsh reality.

Considering that movie production is on a downward spiral, will the film students actually have an industry to work in in the future?

Stubbornly upbeat, Meily stressed that "the Filipino audience for new media is growing. Aside from film and television, we now have DVD, cable TV, in-flight entertainment, music videos, e-movies, and I believe soon we will have cell phone movies."



ACCLAIMED directors Mark Meily and Maryo J. de los Reyes recognize the value of film education.

He exhorted the youth not to be dissuaded by these changes and challenges.

"We define medium as a means and never an end," he said. "If we can express our ideas and reach a bigger audience, why not? In the end, it's the story that matters. Not the medium. We will be making more films in whatever medium we can express ourselves best."

Meily also took note of the "Rise of the Indies."

"In last year's Urian Awards, almost all of the nominees for Best Film were independent producers," he remarked. "Independent because they were newbies and did not work in a studio system with a pool of stars, directors, writers, crew and PR people. They didn't follow the existing business model."

This month also sees the emergence of more indie filmmakers with the Cinemalaya and Cinema One digital film festivals, Meily noted.

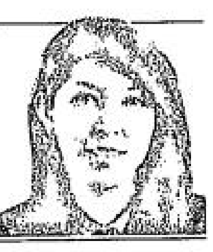
"Independent filmmaking is not a new phe

MARK/ A29

Show biz version of the Sona

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Ann Carvajal



WE ALL heard the State of the Nation Address (Sona) of President **Macapagal-Arroyo** but were we really listening? If the different factions want to see eye to eye, they should try using their ears.

If show biz folk were to give their version of the Sona, what improvements would they want in the industry? Here's what two of my favorite people in show biz (who are not OF show biz, though) have to say . . .

ALBERT MARTINEZ: "I'd push for a tax break on the importation of film stock and equipment and government subsidy on movies with potential global release. I'd fight for the film industry to be recognized as an INDUSTRY. Hope this all happens in my lifetime."

CARMINA VILLAROEL: "I would make a call to work hard and be more professional in our craft. I would encourage writers to come up with good scripts and directors to make more quality films."

Nora's grudge

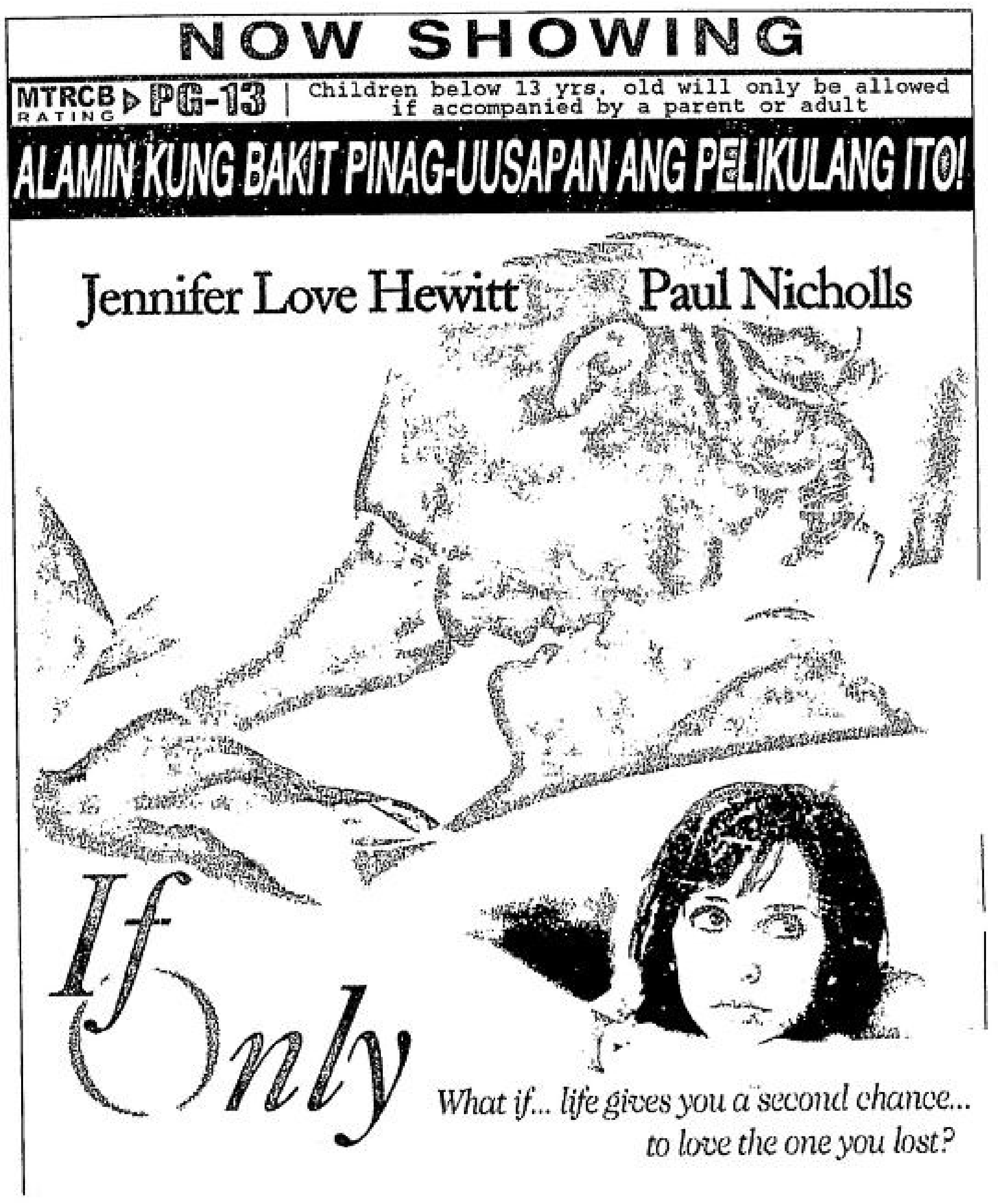
JUST Asking: Could it be true that one of the reasons **Nora Aunor** bears a grudge against Ms Arroyo (aside from PGMA's unfulfilled promise to help Ate Guy in the alleged drug possession case she's embroiled in) is her failure to revive the defunct TV show "Superstar" (which was supposedly part of the package in exchange for La Aunor's support during the elections)?

"Superstar" was the "S.O.P" and "A.S.A.P" of yesteryears (I remember tagging along with my mom—who was one of Nora's co-hosts—to the show's taping). If it's any consolation to Ate Guy, her wanting to recapture her lost glory is not as insurmountable as Ate Glo's.

Still on the superstar, a member of her inner circle told me that Nora should be careful of people around her. Sad to say, one of her closest allies has stabbed her in the back.

As my source puts it "*Wag pakasiguro si* Ate Guy. *Nilaglag siya ni* ______. *May* big secret *si* Guy *na ni*-reveal *ng* trusted friend *niya sa isa sa mga* members *ng* Hyatt 10. So may *alas na hawak ang* Malacañang *kasi* before *nag*-resign *yung* cabinet member *na*-relay *na kay* PGMA *yung lihim ni* Guy." Just like in

SHOW/ A30



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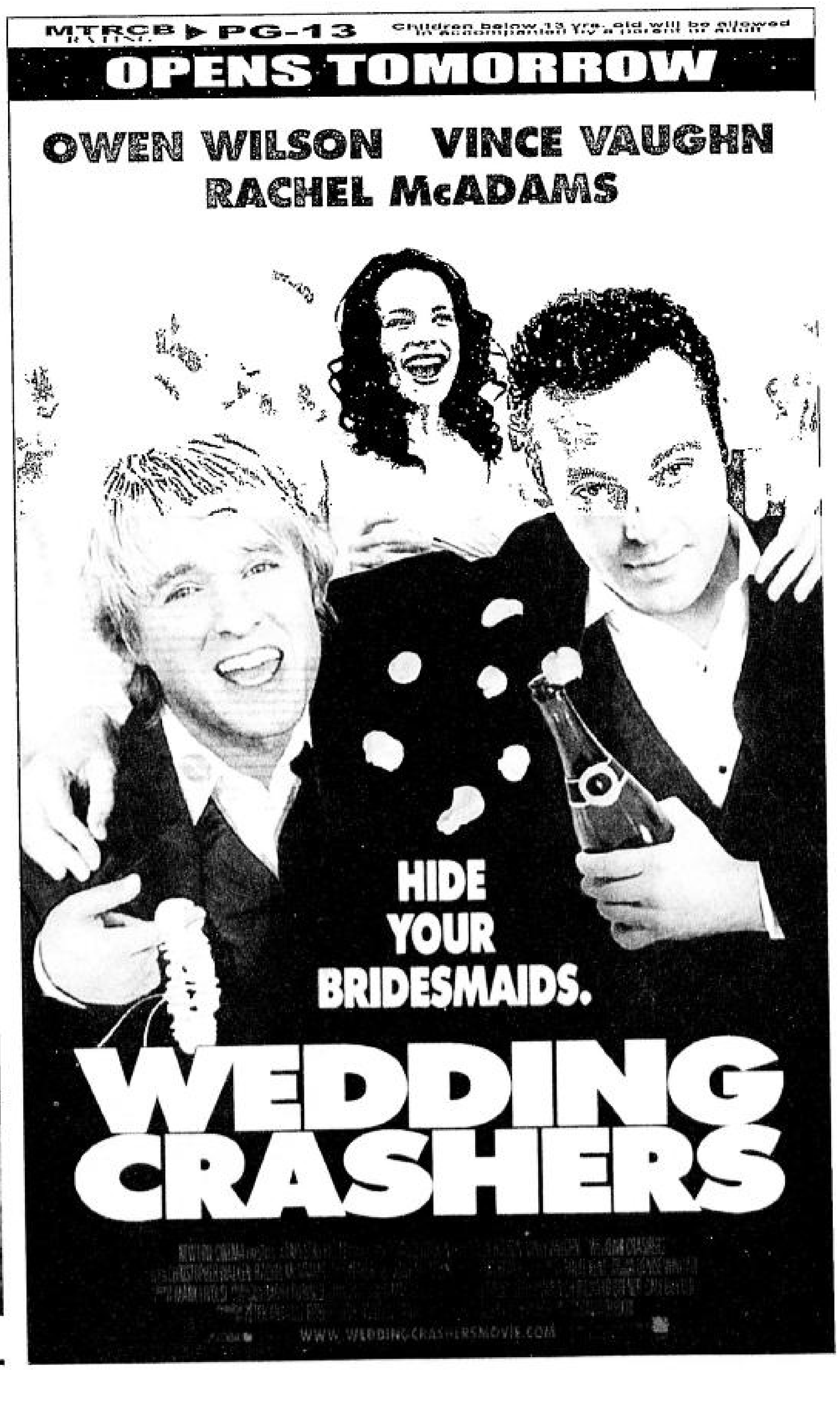

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TUESDAY, JULY 26, 2005

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Finance chief amenable to debt relief bid

Says diplomatic sector must initiate request

By Michelle V. Remo

FINANCE Secretary Margarito Teves said he was open to the idea of seeking debt relief as a partial solution to the country's lingering fiscal problem.

The task of communicating with foreign creditors regarding the possibility of relieving some of the Philippines' external debts, however, should be left with people outside the government's economic team.

"We can ask for debt relief, but there are people who are capable of handling this, such as members of the diplomatic community. Because when you talk of debt relief on a large scale, it will require talking with many nations," he said.

The newly appointed finance chief said the demands of accomplishing the government's fiscal and economic reform programs required full attention of the members of the economic team.

Although he said he had no objections with the Philippines seeking to be included in the list of countries whose debts should be pardoned, the rigors of discussing debt relief with the international community should be assigned to officials outside the economic team, if the government would at all pursue such a suggestion.

Teves made the statement in a response to a question on his view on debt relief raised during a forum with members of the foreign press and the business community last week.

The proposal came in the wake of the country's growing debt and mounting calls from other poor countries to have their obligations written off. As of March this year, the national government's debt reached P3.87 trillion, and about P1.8 trillion are owed to foreign creditors.

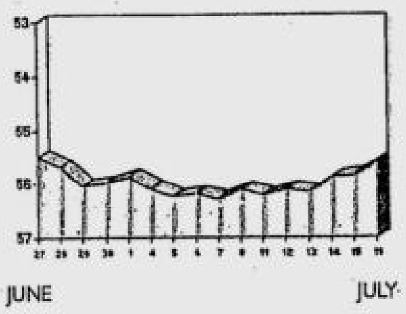
The government has been allocating at least 30 percent of its annual budget to interest payments. Interest and principal debt eat up nearly 90 percent of government revenues, the Department of Finance had said.

The Philippine government has been working on various revenue-raising measures, such as imposing higher taxes

FINANCE/ B5

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES



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As of 5 p.m., July 22, 2005

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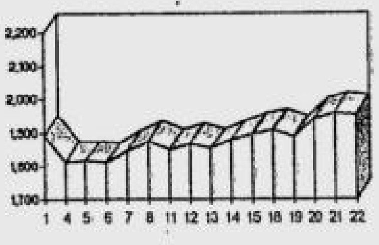
As of 3 p.m., July 22, 2005

GOLD: $423.30-423.80
per ounce Hong Kong, July 21, 2005

STOCK MARKET

Trading to be dictated by GMA speech

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B2)

STOCK trading resumes today with investors uncertain as to whether they should pick up bargain stocks or continue to wait on the sidelines, analysts said.

President Macapagal-Arroyo's annual State of the Nation Address before Congress yesterday received mixed reactions, although the peaceful conduct of opposition rallies can somehow temper any further decline in stock prices, they said.

Ms Arroyo's speech comes amid widespread calls for her removal from office on opposition allegations that she cheated to win the May 2004 elections.

For the week ending July 22, the Philippine Stock Exchange composite index gained 57.32 points or 3.02 percent to 1,954.40 points.

AFP

WHAT'S INSIDE

RP, India sign air agreement /B2

$29.7M in hot money flowed into RP amid crisis /B3

Semiconductor exports up 6.8% in May /B2

State firms remit ₱4.75B in dividends

THE NATIONAL government has already collected P4.75 billion in dividends from state-owned companies as of this month, surpassing its full-year target of P4 billion with still five months before the year ends.

This was announced by the Department of Finance, which earlier said it was urging government-owned and -controlled corporations (GOCCs) and government financial institutions (GFIs) to voluntarily increase their contributions to the national government to help ease the yawning budget deficit.

The DOF said the state-owned companies that remitted the biggest dividends as of July 18 were: Development Bank of the Philippines (P1.14 billion), Philippine Port Authority (P613.5 million), Philippine National Oil Co. (P612.71 million), Land Bank of the Philippines (P300 million) and Philippine Economic Zone Authority (P188 million).

Other state-owned companies that have already remitted dividends included: Philippine Deposit Insurance Corp. (P101.09 million), Mactan-Cebu International Airport Authority (P53.49 million), Philippine Leisure and Retirement Authority (P40.72 million), Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (P34.46 million), Cebu Port Authority (P33.72 million), Philippine Fisheries Development Authority (P10.34 million);

National Housing Authority (P7.56 million), Human Settlements Development Corp (P2.5 million),

STATE/ B5

INQUIRER MONITOR

Figures that matter in our nation's life

Effects of macro indicators on budget deficit (2005, in billion pesos)

MACROECONOMIC INDICATOR	EFFECT ON BUDGET DEFICIT
1 percentage point decrease in imports	↑2.8
1 percentage point increase in T-bill rate	↑1.7
P-1 depreciation in foreign exchange	zero net effect
1 percentage point increase in real GDP	↓6.4

Sources: Congressional Planning and Budget Development

THE GOVERNMENT'S fiscal program is highly sensitive to four macroeconomic indicators, namely: foreign exchange rates, interest rates, imports and real GDP growth. Based on the sensitivity analysis, a percentage drop in imports will have the greatest impact on the budget deficit since import duties and taxes account for 20 percent of total tax revenues. And though a higher interest rate can lead to more withholding tax on interest income, this will be outweighed by higher interest payments on domestic borrowing.

Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research

JULY 1-31, 2005.

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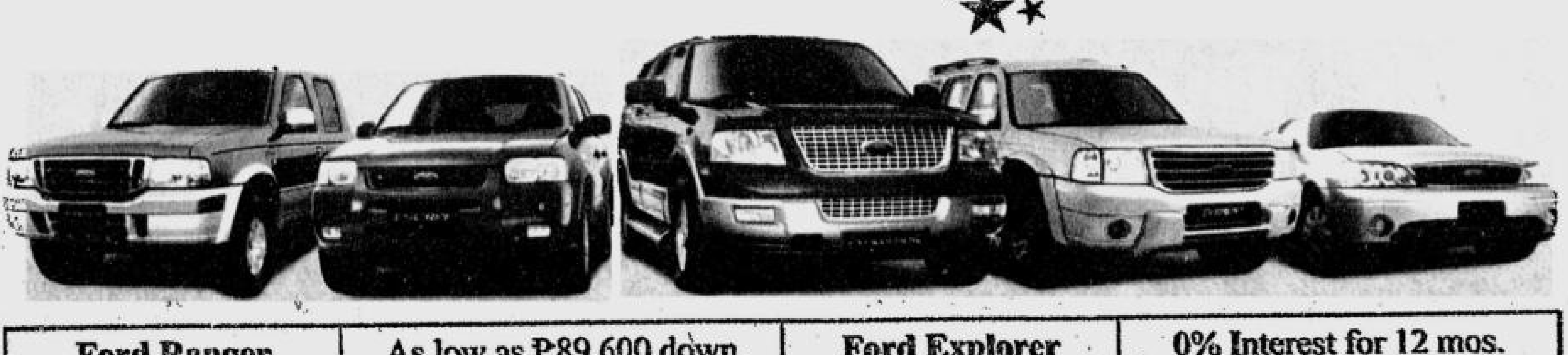

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August 2004
By Xiao Ming Wu 21/6/2004

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RP, India sign air rights agreement

Big market for local carriers

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE PHILIPPINES and India last week signed a new air rights agreement that would allow Philippine carriers to fly daily to a key city in the subcontinent.

The new agreement, which would also allow Indian carriers to fly to a major destination in the Philippines, replaced an older deal that had remained dormant since 1949.

Tomas Mañalac, executive director of the Civil Aeronautics Board, said the Philippine carriers would have to choose their key destination among the cities of New Delhi, Calcutta, Mumbai and Chennai.

Indian carriers would also have the option to fly either to Manila or Cebu. Clark might also be considered, Mañalac said.

He said the updated air services agreement with India was crucial, given a population of more than a billion and a growing aviation industry.

The deal will also allow Philippine and Indian carriers to drop off and pick up passengers at designated transit points.

Negotiations for the new air deal were concluded on July 21 in India.

The vital agreement with one of Asia's most populated economies is the first for the Philippines this year. Plans to sign similar agreements with Burma and Iran in the first half of the year did not materialize.

Mañalac said India also threw in a provision for an open-skies deal for cargo in the revised bilateral agreement.

The Philippines offered a similar deal, but restricted the open-skies area within the Clark economic zone and Subic Freeport in Central Luzon.

Mañalac said the 1949 air agreement between the Philippines and India did not clearly define capacity and route structure.

Last week, these vague items were clarified and defined, he said. A fifth freedom right, for instance, was finally made clear.

The fifth freedom provision will allow the carriers of both countries to take passengers to an intermediate point, like Bangkok, and while there, pick up passengers to bring to either the Philippines or India.

The intermediate point, according to Mañalac, has yet to be identified.

The two countries also agreed to review the air deal after a year, and enhance the agreement where possible.

India, said Mañalac, was open to expanding the daily flight schedule after a year. He said the Philippines would like India to open two more cities: Bangalore and Hyderabad.

Next year, the two countries may discuss a sixth freedom right, which may allow carriers to fly to a third destination after India or the Philippines.

WORKERS at the local unit of Cypress Semiconductor monitor an automated assembly line for semiconductors in Laguna.
AFP

Semiconductor exports increased 6.8% in May

By Ronnel W. Domingo

PHILIPPINE semiconductor exports posted a 6.8 percent growth in May, outpacing the rate of increase in global sales and softening the impact of the sharp decline in the shipments of other electronics products on the country's total export performance.

The Department of Trade and Industry said semiconductor exports in May rose to $1.55 billion from $1.45 billion in the same month last year.

Data from Semiconductor Industry Association (SIA) showed that worldwide sales of semiconductor products expanded by only 4.1 percent in the same month.

Trade Undersecretary Thomas G. Aquino said the export performance of semiconductor products—together with another top dollar earner, garments and textile—enabled the exporting industry to keep its growth momentum despite the continued rise in fuel prices that adversely affected economies worldwide.

SIA data showed that worldwide shipments of semiconductor products were affected by the drop in the price of (Dynamic Random Access Memory) DRAM chips, used widely for personal computers and workstations.

Since DRAMs are one of the major segments of the total semiconductor market, any significant change in price would have an impact on total chip sales.

SIA projects that global sales will grow by 6 percent in 2005 and 9.8 percent compounded yearly through 2008, mainly on strong demand for personal computers and wireless handsets.

The Semiconductor and Electronics Industry of the Philippines Inc. (Seipi), for its part, has revised its growth projection for the sector to 10 percent his year, from the original target of only 5 percent.

Exports of non-semiconductor electronic products, such as consumer electronics and laptops, are expected to stabilize when the on going investment programs of Uniden, Quanta (laptops) and Kolin (flat screen television) are completed. Toshiba and Hitachi are, likewise, making adjustments in their product lines.

Toshiba transferred its production of notebook PCs to China, but increased the production of hard disk drives in its Laguna plant.

Hitachi Philippines, for its part, transferred its production of 3.5-inch drives for servers to Thailand, but plans to double its production of hard drives in the Philippines from 8 million in 2004 to 16 million in 2005.

The void left by Toshiba and Hitachi continued to be felt in May, greatly contributing to the 26-percent decline in non-semiconductor electronic products exports.

Petron seen to surpass profit goal

By Abigail L. Ho

PETRON Corp. expects to surpass its P3.6-billion profit target for the year, on the back of its strong first half performance and bright export prospects in the second half of the year.

"We're optimistic that we'll surpass (our full-year target)," Petron president and chief executive Khalid Al-Faddagh said in a briefing after yesterday's stockholders' meeting.

The oil firm registered a net income of P2.3 billion in the first semester of the year. This was 70 percent higher than the P1.4 billion it posted in the same period last year.

Total revenue during the period surged to P85.6 billion, 29 percent higher than year-ago level.

The company attributed its strong first quarter performance to higher export volumes and good regional prices. In the first half of the year, exports grew 18 percent to 2.26 million barrels from 1.92 million in the same period last year.

In cash terms, exports grew by P440 million in the first half, boosting the export business' contribution to total first semester profit to 35 percent from 27 percent last year.

Domestic sales volume, however, registered a 9-percent decline in the first semester to only 22.88 million barrels due to weak local demand.

Overall, sales volume dipped 2 percent to 25.15 million barrels.

"We were able to take advantage of high prices of exports, which contributed significantly to our bottom line. We are also reaping the benefits from investments that improved the cost-efficiency of our Bataan refinery," Petron chair Nicasio Alcantara said.

The company in early May inaugurated $100 million worth of new facilities at its Bataan refinery, making Petron the first in the country to be able to produce its own Clean Air Act-compliant fuel.

Petron's new Gasoil Hydrotreater and Light Virgin Naphtha Isomerization unit have the capacity to produce 22,000 barrels and 10,000 barrels a day, respectively, of CAA-compliant diesel and gasoline.

$29.7M in hot money still flowed into RP amid crisis

By Doris C. Dumlao

SOME foreign portfolio funds trickled back into the Philippines the week after key economic managers led by then Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima quit the Cabinet.

At the time, bargain-hunters believed that the resignations would result in a speedy resolution of the political crisis, analysts said.

Some fearless investors also found an opportunity to buy government securities to take advantage of the uptick in the interest rates that week.

Data from the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas showed that some $29.7 million in net inflows of "hot money" got into the Philippine Stock Exchange and government securities in the week ending July 15—a turnaround from the net outflows of $58.5 million incurred in the week after the value added tax was suspended by the Supreme Court.

In the case of government securities, there were gross inflows of $58.2 million as against total outflows of $29.3 million. BSP Gov. Amando Tetangco Jr. said there were investors who also picked up government securities and placed funds in peso deposits as interest rates had become "more attractive."

On the other hand, there were gross inflows of $55.9 million into the stock market, which offset the $43.6 million in total outflows.

Gross inflows of $1.4 million in peso time deposits were negated by the gross outflows of $12.9 million from the same instruments.

What tempered the capital flight at the time was the expectation that the defection of key economic managers would end the crisis. But since the President has rejected calls to resign, the market has started to brace for a prolonged political impasse.

Major oil player to push through with $250-M refinery investment

By Abigail L. Ho

PETRON Corp. will push through with its $250-million refinery enhancement project to allow the industry giant to take advantage of the increasing demand for petrochemicals in the region.

Khalid Al-Faddagh, Petron president and chief executive, said during yesterday's stockholders' meeting that petrochemical demand would outpace global gross domestic product which could remain strong in the coming years.

"There's a unique opportunity for Petron right now to sell petrochemicals in the region," Al-Faddagh said. "The market condition for petrochemicals is very favorable. This is the golden age of refining petrochemicals."

Al-Faddagh added that the firm would need to "take advantage of that opportunity."

"We are in a very good position to further develop our refinery asset to account for expansion into the petrochemical industry," he said.

Up to 2010, the company will need some $250 million to double its mixed xylene production capacity and establish a benzene/toluene extraction facility, and propylene from fluid catalytic cracker and feedstock recovery unit, Al-Faddagh said.

Once in place, the facilities will boost Petron's presence in the domestic market, as well as in countries such as China, Thailand, Malaysia, Australia, Taiwan, South Korea and Japan, he added.

In early May, Al-Faddagh announced that Petron would be investing some $350 million to strengthen its refinery operations and expand its product base.

However, after undertaking some refinements and acquiring a "clearer picture" of how the company should pace its investments in the coming years, the oil firm decided that $250 million should be enough until 2010, he said.

"It's just a matter of timing, as there may be other phases that will come at a later stage," Al-Faddagh said. "A master plan is always subject to changes, economic condition evaluation. At the time, when we said $350 million, we were maybe looking at a fuzzier picture."

He said the reduction in investment commitment had nothing to do with the country's current political state.

If anything, Petron chair Nicasio Alcantara said this was as good a time as any to make new investments in its refinery.

"While others are shying away from further investments, we look at this as an opportunity," Alcantara said. "We're putting more money into the refinery to make it more competitive."

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5.0MM - 9,999,999	5.750	6.000	6.000	6.000
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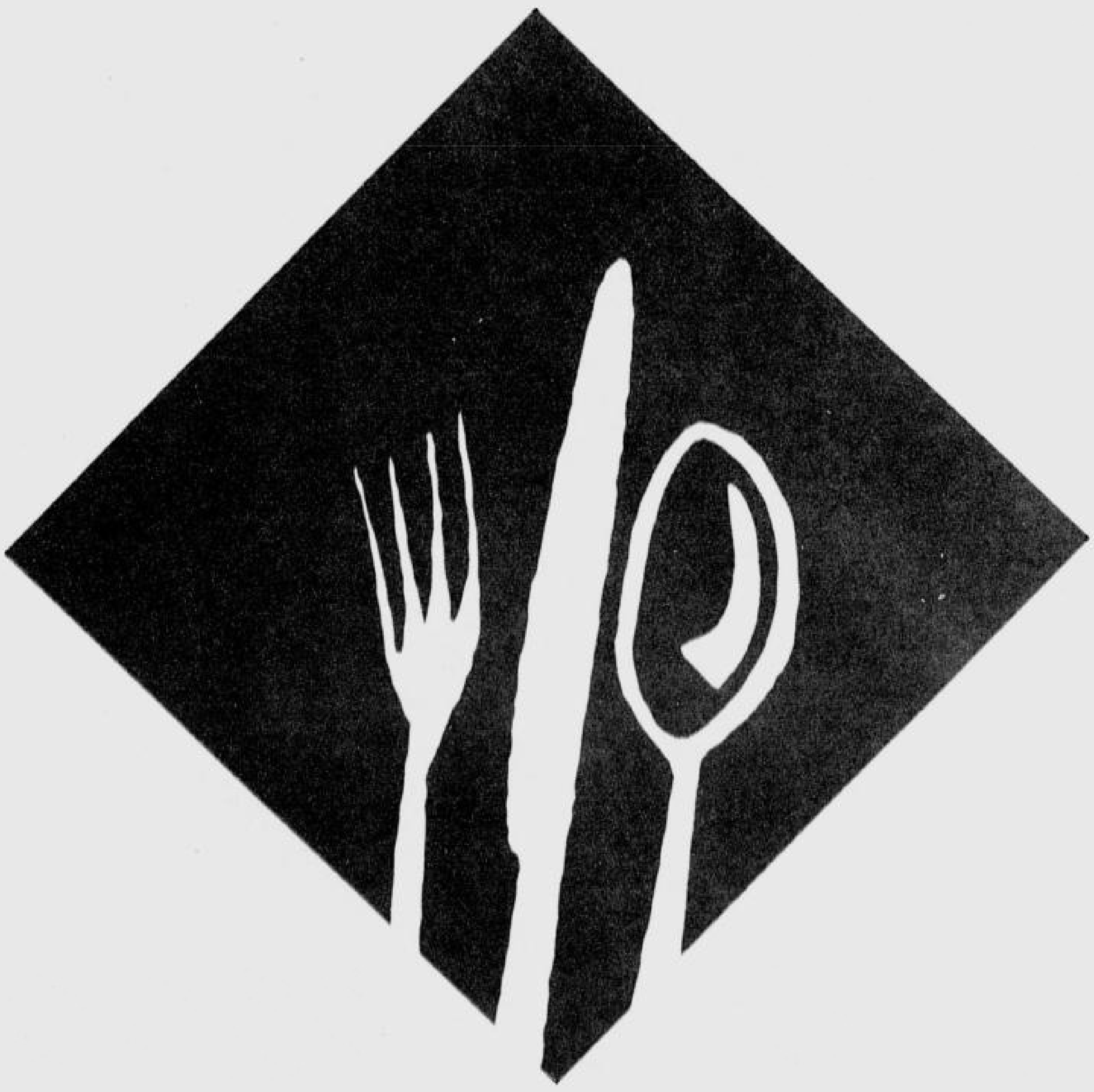

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PeopleSupport completes migration to new center

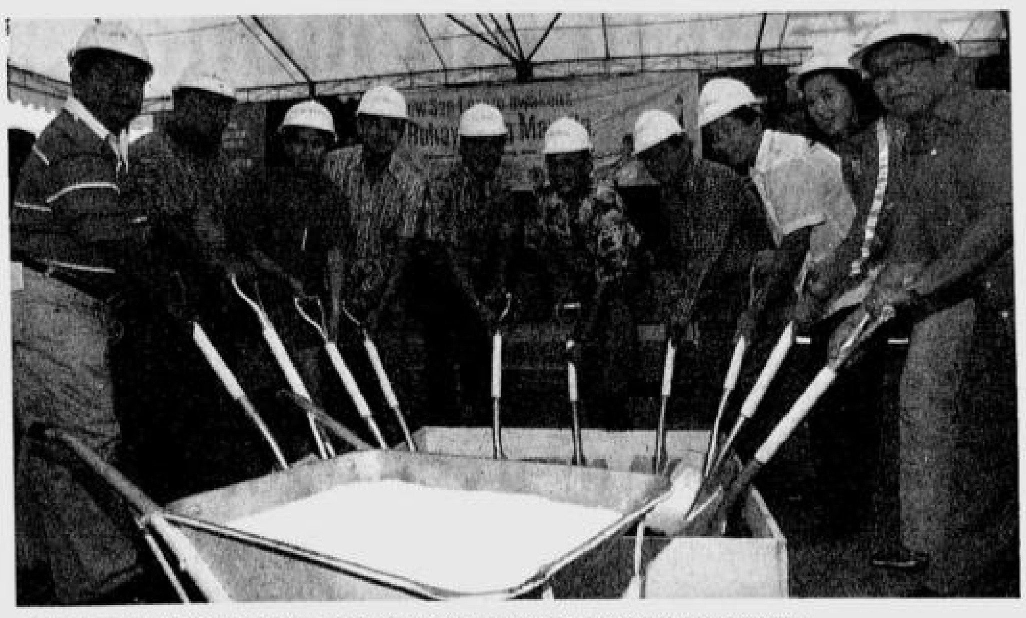
PEOPLESUPPORT Inc, an offshore business process outsourcing (BPO) provider that offers customer management and accounts receivable management services for US-based clients from its facilities in the Philippines, announced that the company has completed the operational migration to its newly constructed Philippine regional headquarters, the PeopleSupport Center. As the first facility in the Philippines built specifically for BPO services, the new PeopleSupport Center sets a benchmark for the industry.

"We are very proud of reaching this major milestone," said Lance Rosenzweig, PeopleSupport's chair and CEO. "The PeopleSupport Center is a testament to the success of PeopleSupport in the Philippines. The PeopleSupport Center was completed ahead of schedule and the transition was seamless to our clients. We expect our new facility, with the most advanced contact center technology and design, to further improve the quality and reliability of our services to clients worldwide."

The PeopleSupport Center is located in the prestigious area of Makati, the financial district of Manila, Philippines. To date, more than 1,700 employees have moved into the new center while continuing to service clients without interruption. This built-to-suit center, which is on a long-term lease, will eventually increase PeopleSupport's total seat capacity in all current centers to over 5,000 workstations for operations, management, and support staff once the new center is fully built out, which holds approximately 3,300 seats.

Equipped with new, top-of-the-line telephony and data infrastructure, the PeopleSupport Center offers world-class services to clients. The center offers a 24x7 network operations center, IT helpdesk and workforce management. The center also has a highly secure and robust on-site data center with complete UPS power back-up and high capacity diesel generators. The final IT applications will be migrated to the new data center later this month.

With five levels, the PeopleSupport Center provides many employee benefits, including stylish modern break rooms on each floor, ergonomic workstations, a 24x7 medical clinic, free gym, shower rooms and an employee lounge. The center is also home to PeopleSupport University, with numerous advanced training rooms. For the convenience of employees, several American-based restaurants and retail establishments have opened a presence on the first level of the PeopleSupport Center, some of which will offer round-the-clock services to support the center's 24x7 operations.



AYALA LAND SUBSIDIARIES, MJCI GROUND BREAKING

Ayala Land Inc (ALI) – through subsidiaries Community Innovations Inc (CII) and Laguna Properties Holdings Inc (LPHI) – and the Manila Jockey Club Inc (MJCI) recently conducted a soft groundbreaking ceremony for their residential community project at MJCI's 6.47-hectare Sta. Cruz property as part of the activities for Manila's 434th Anniversary celebration. The project – ALI's first in Manila – involves the construction of townhouses and condominiums for families, entrepreneurs, businessmen, professionals and OFWs. Photo shows officials during the groundbreaking rites: (from left) Barangay chair Felipe Falcon, Makati Development Corp president Emilio Tumbocon, CII president Angela Lacson, Rep. Roces, Mayor Atienza, ALI president Jim I. Ayala, MJCI chair and CEO Alfonso Reyno Jr., Task Force Buhayin ang Maynila chair Kim Atienza, MJCI vice chair Mariza Santos-Tan, and LPHI chief finance officer Leo Montenegro.

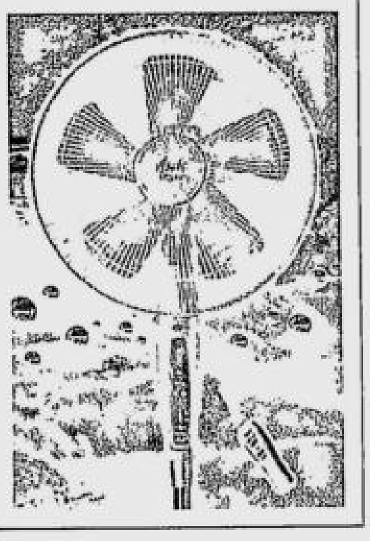
TIA MARIA'S
Shakey's
Lite

SHAKEY'S, TIA MARIA'S, COWBOY GRILL LITE JOINT INAUGURATION

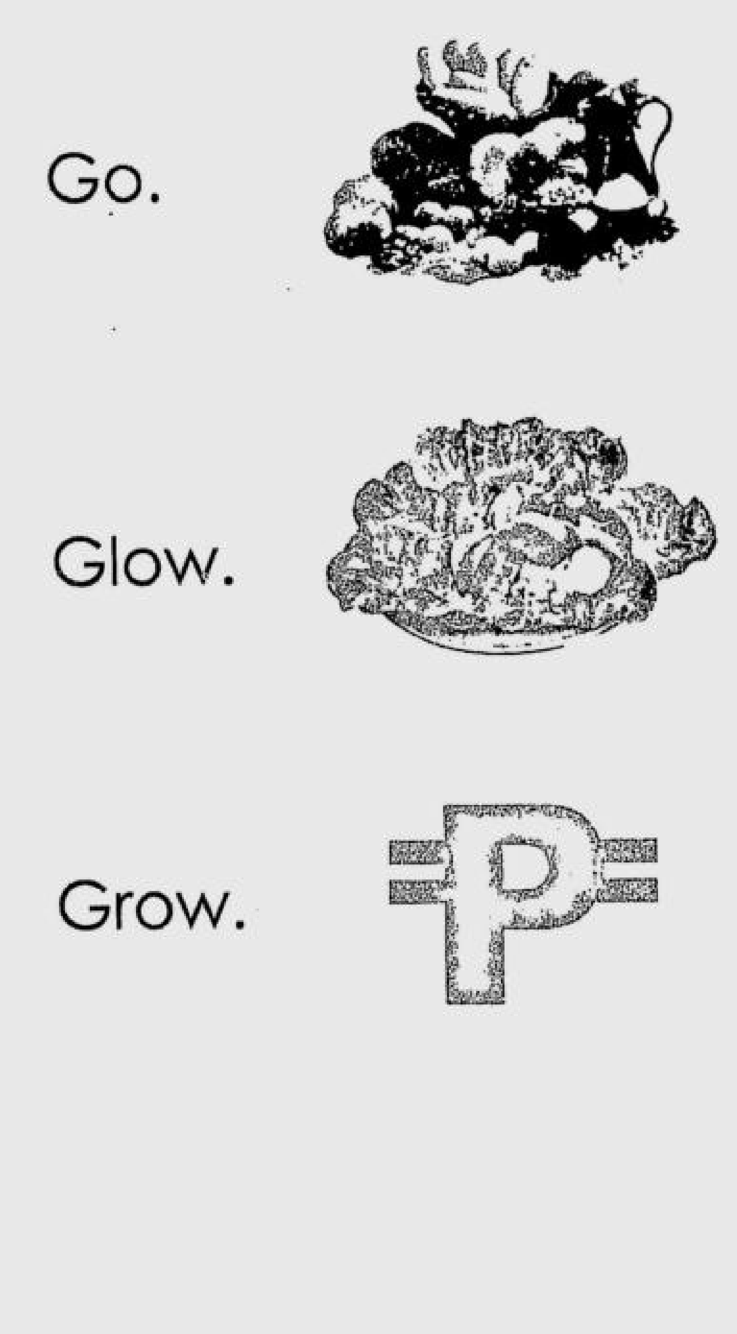
Shakey's Tia Maria's and Cowboy Gill Lite recently celebrated their joint inauguration at UN Avenue corner Maria Orosa Street, Manila. Shown are (from left): Mariella de Leon, Pilar Lorenzo, Chiqui Prieto, Marixi Prieto, Alex Prieto, Marie Ramos, Leo Prieto Jr, Father Pem, Vic Gregorio and Ruel Padilla.

ProductFILES

Asahi Electric Fan cleans as it cools



ASAHI, awarded Outstanding Manufacturer of Electric Fans in 2003 and 2004 by the Consumers Union of the Philippines, marks an innovative milestone with the launch of its electric fan with Ioniser. Ions are proven in laboratory tests to dramatically help deactivate or eliminate harmful allergens present in the air. The new Asahi Electric Fan with Ioniser has that same anti-pollution ion technology that cleanses and fights most airborne mite allergies which causes respiratory disorders in humans. Unlike air purifiers, there is no need to replace the filter in an Ioniser fan. Certified environment safe, the Asahi Electric Fan with Ioniser comes in 14" and 16" sizes and is now available in all leading department stores and appliance centers nationwide.



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APJF, PLDT launch Entrepreneurship Campus Seminar Series

THE AURELIO Periquet Jr. Foundation (APJF) and the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Company (PLDT) have recently launched the 4th annual Entrepreneurship Campus Seminar Series with a theme of "Go Negosyo!"

The seminar series which started this July features successful entrepreneurs in various fields as speakers. They will talk on how they started their business and how they were able to surmount obstacles to be where they are now.

Bienvenido Tantoco, the brains behind Shopwise will speak on how his entrepreneurial innovation helps in his retail business. Brothers in business Johnlu and Johnip Koa talk about how they excel in separate fields with the former steering French Baker to success and the later heading industry giant Procter and Gamble. Figaro Coffee president Pacita Juan will share how a homegrown enterprise can stand on its own beside multinational coffee brands. Father and son Jose Concepcion Jr. and Jose Ma. Concepcion, chair and president of RFM Corp respectively will discuss how a big conglomerate changes hands from one generation to the next. Ragnarok creator Aloysius Colayco talks on how his love for animation brought him fame and success.

Tamilee Industries president Carmencita Leung will enlighten listeners on how a simple hobby of making Christmas decors was transformed into a dollar earning business and enabled the Filipinos' creativity to break into the world market. Lamoiyan Corp president Cecilio Pedro will share the story of how a downturn in his business gave birth to the Hapee Toothpaste brand.

Can a doctor turned entrepreneur make it in business? This will be answered by Splash Corp chair Dr. Rolando Hortaleza. The other speakers are Jay Aldeguer of Islands Souvenir, Penshoppe's Bernie Liu, PLDT vice president Menardo Jimenez Jr., Sandy Javier of Andok's Manok fame and Delby Bragais of the North Road Fashion Group.

The seminar organizers hope that students will learn from the business values that these speakers followed in attaining success. The seminar series also seeks to encourage the youth to take an active role not only in the business sector but also in government and socio-economic circles.

The Aurelio Periquet Jr. Foundation was established in 1998 with the aim of inculcating and promoting the true qualities of patriotic and responsible business leadership. It aspires to encourage Filipino business leaders to dedicate their lives in the service of their countrymen.

The 4th APJF-PLDT Entrepreneurship Campus Seminar Series will visit The University of Asia & the Pacific, Don Bosco Technical College, Miriam College, Colegio de San Juan de Letran, Assumption College, Far Eastern University, Ateneo de Manila University, De La Salle University, St. Michael's College of Laguna, De La Salle University College of St. Benilde, San Beda College, St. Scholastica's College, University of the East, University of the Philippines and the University of Sto. Tomas.

TRIUMPH CELEBRATES 15TH ANNIVERSARY

Triumph International, the world's leader in intimate fashion scored back to back hits when it unveiled the new Pick and Pay Center and Product Showroom during the 15th anniversary celebration of the company which was held recently at the Triumph main office in Makati. Shown during the ribbon cutting ceremonies of the Pick and Pay Center are (from left) Triumph head for direct sales and marketing, Raymund Padilla; lawyer Abigail Binay and Dr. Teresa Salud representing Mayor Jejomar Binay of Makati; and Triumph marketing manager Esa Lukban (third from left, partly hidden).

Maybank has new ATM customer service hotline

MAYBANK Philippines recently announced the availability of the Maybank ATM Hotline Number (02) 521-6170 to address queries and concerns related to ATM transactions. Maybank account holders who have been issued the Maybankard automated - teller machine card can access this customer service hotline number any time of the day and any day of the week through any landline or cellular phone. A Maybank ATM Center officer or staff will be readily on-hand to assist customers on their inquiries. The Maybankard ATM card is available to those who open a Maybank Regular Savings or Maybank Premier 1 account. Aside from the usual ATM card facilities like withdrawal, balance inquiry, fund transfer, bills payment and point of sales (POS) payment, an added feature of the Maybankard ATM is its inter-country connectivity. Thus, Maybankard holders can access their account through over 800 ATMs in the Philippines, Singapore, Brunei and Malaysia. To get a Maybankard ATM, visit any of Maybank's 45 branches nationwide. Or call Maybank Products and Services at (02) 523-7777 ext 129 for the branch nearest you.

JAPANESE AMBASSADOR INAUGURATES SCHOOL BUILDING

Japanese Ambassador to the Philippines Ryuichiro Yamazaki (2nd from right) led the inauguration ceremony for the Japan Official Development Assistance (ODA)-funded, project for construction of a two-storey six classroom building for Cabuyao National High School, amounting to US$77,594, together with Laguna's 2nd District Representative Justin Chipeco (behind, form left), Cabuyao Mayor Lina Aguillo (right), CNHS principal Consolacio Gonzales (left) and former Cabuyao Mayor Proseso Aguilll on June 9. This project was realized under the Grant Assistance for Grassroots Human Security Projects (GGP). The new school building with six classrooms can provide better learning environment for the students thereby increasing their opportunities to become globally competitive and have a brighter future in the long run.

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of July 22, 2005)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	16,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	29.5	29.5	29	29	641,500
Bank of the Phil. Islands	50	50	49.5	50	365,700
China Banking Corp.	780	780	780	780	2,150
Citystate Savings Bank	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	500
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.53	0.53	0.53	0.53	610,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	48	48	47	47.5	188,800
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	28	28	27	27	132,200
Philippine National Bank	46	48.5	46	48	122,800
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	11.5	12.5	11.5	12.5	130,000
Union Bank of the Phil.	29.5	29.5	29.5	29.5	5,000
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Bankard Inc.	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	50,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	2775	2775	2775	2775	750
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.02	1.02	1.02	1.02	38,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1990	1995	1990	1995	4,740
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	12.5	12.5	12.25	12.25	16,900
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.02	1.02	0.99	1.02	2,715,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	865	865	850	850	110
Ipeople Inc.	2.95	3	2.95	3	17,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.046	0.046	0.046	0.046	200,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.049	0.049	0.049	0.049	200,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	2.7	2.7	2.65	2.65	438,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1585	1610	1585	1605	113,010
Philweb Corp.	0.017	0.017	0.016	0.017	4,000,000
POWER, ENERGY & OTHER UTILITIES					
Manila Electric Co. A	14.5	14.5	14.25	14.25	66,800
Manila Electric Co. B	24.25	24.25	23.75	23.75	71,300
Manila Water Co. Inc.	6.9	6.9	6.7	6.8	3,777,000
Petron Corp.	3	3	2.9	2.95	352,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	7.8	7.9	7.7	7.8	2,305,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Holcim Philippines Inc.	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	121,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.3	3.4	3.3	3.4	351,000
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	3.75	3.75	3.75	3.75	3,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	30	30	30	30	300
Jollibee Foods Corp.	31.5	31.5	30	30	111,100
Pancake House Inc.	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.2	4,000
San Miguel Corp. A	62.5	64.5	62.5	64.5	302,300
San Miguel Corp. B	100	100	98	98	103,790
Vitarich Corp.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	200,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Asia Amalgamated Holdings	0.085	0.085	0.085	0.085	200,000
Atok-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	5	5	5	5	4,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.008	0.008	0.0075	0.0075	14,000,000
Ayala Corp.	320	320	312.5	315	38,950
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	4.9	4.9	4.8	4.9	522,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.023	0.023	0.023	0.023	8,200,000
A. Soriano Corp.	1.9	1.9	1.9	1.9	140,000
APC Group Inc.	0.24	0.24	0.24	0.24	10,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	8,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.74	0.74	0.72	0.72	1,410,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	10,200
Benpres Holdings Corp.	1.04	1.04	1	1.02	8,154,000
A Brown Company Inc.	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	30,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	1,420,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.235	0.235	0.235	0.235	1,870,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	2.36	2.42	2.36	2.4	4,568,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.03	2,000,000
Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp.	6.9	6.9	6.6	6.7	1,211,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	43	43	42	42.5	388,700
Global Equities Inc.	0.0725	0.0725	0.0725	0.0725	1,000,000
Ionics Inc.	1.1	1.1	1.06	1.06	210,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	3.3	3.3	3.25	3.25	1,346,000
Macroasia Corp.	1.7	1.8	1.7	1.76	31,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.34	1.34	1.3	1.3	1,368,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.33	0.33	0.33	0.33	2,110,000
Polar Property Holdings	1.98	1.98	1.98	1.98	3,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.185	0.185	0.185	0.185	150,000
SM Investments Corp.	221	222	217	220	576,330
South China Resources Inc.	0.65	0.65	0.65	0.65	100,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc	0.165	0.165	0.165	0.165	200,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.125	0.13	0.125	0.125	1,220,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	600,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Macondray Plastics Inc.	2.1	2.1	2.1	2.1	2,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.97	0.97	0.93	0.94	5,960,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.75	0.75	0.75	0.75	410,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.26	1.26	1.22	1.26	845,000
Manila Jockey Club	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	16,000
Philippine Racing Club	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	50,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (PDR)	12.25	12.5	12.25	12.25	117,500
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	5,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series X	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	300
PLDT 10% Pref Series AA	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	14,800
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	8.1	8.2	8	8.2	24,743,000
Cityland Development Corp.	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	200,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.88	0.88	0.88	0.88	300,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.195	0.195	0.195	0.195	700,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.35	0.35	0.34	0.35	10,420,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.44	1.44	1.4	1.44	2,350,000
City & Land Developers	1.74	1.74	1.74	1.74	5,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	300,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	4.25	4.25	4.25	4.25	10,000
SM Development Corp.	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	41,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	7.3	7.3	7.3	7.3	2,507,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	0.99	0.99	0.85	0.85	110,000
Apex Mining Co. Inc. B	0.74	0.9	0.74	0.89	650,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	2,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	5	5	4.9	4.9	95,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.32	0.32	0.31	0.31	290,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.35	0.35	0.33	0.34	7,790,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.016	0.016	0.016	0.016	18,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.021	0.021	0.02	0.02	27,400,000
Omico Corp.	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	84,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.83	0.83	0.81	0.81	1,690,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.92	0.92	0.9	0.9	3,820,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	28.5	30	28.5	29.5	550,500
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	10,000
OIL					
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	0.0065	20,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	11,000,000
Pacifica	0.009	0.009	0.009	0.009	5,000,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	3	3	3	3	8,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.135	0.135	0.135	0.135	630,000

Canadian firm eyes stake in Platinum Plans

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

A CANADIAN dealer of scholarship plans has expressed interest in acquiring a majority stake in embattled Platinum Plans Phils. Inc.

An informed source told the INQUIRER that the Canadian firm was about to conduct a due diligence study of Platinum and was considering tapping SGV & Co. to examine the company's financial condition.

The source said the Canadian firm was looking to buy around 60 percent of Platinum.

Platinum earlier said it planned to transform itself into a marketing company should its rehabilitation prove successful.

In a petition with the Makati Regional Trial Court, Platinum said it planned to distribute products and services of companies outside the pre-need industry, such as credit cards, personal loans, and health-related programs.

Platinum said commissions from its distribution efforts should bring in additional funds needed to pay some P300 million in obligations to plan holders.

The pre-need firm was also exploring the possibility of selling non-performing assets, such as idle property. The sale of one piece of property alone was estimated to bring in an estimated P2.2 billion.

Platinum Plans earlier filed for the suspension of payments of its tuition obligations due to financial difficulties.

Platinum Plans, with over 37,000 plan holders, is the second pre-need firm to ask for court protection this year, following Pacific Plans Inc.

Platinum Plans, majority-owned by the Salas family headed by former banker Ernesto Salas, had its license to sell fixed-value and open-ended education plans suspended this year after it met with liquidity problems. Platinum has a trust fund deficit of more than P100 million.

In its petition, Platinum asked the court to suspend all claims that would be filed against it and its guarantors. It said it could settle only up to P75 million of its maturing obligations to plan holders.

It also asked the court to appoint a rehabilitation receiver.

Platinum said that while it has more than sufficient assets to cover its liabilities, it might not be able to pay for plans as they mature, thus, was forced to seek rehabilitation.

CURRENCIES

July 25, 2005 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.823588	1.000000	55.9040
Japan	Yen	0.007301	0.008865	0.4956
United Kingdom	Pound	1.433784	1.740900	97.3233
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.105889	0.128571	7.1876
Switzerland	Franc	0.639978	0.777061	43.4408
Canada	Dollar	0.674629	0.819135	45.7929
Singapore	Dollar	0.488892	0.593613	33.1853
Australia	Dollar	0.620078	0.752899	42.0901
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.184756	2.652731	148.2983
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.219611	0.266652	14.9069
Brunei	Dollar	0.487445	0.591856	33.0871
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000084	0.000102	0.0057
Thailand	Baht	0.019549	0.023736	1.3269
UAE	Dirham	0.224270	0.272309	15.2232
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.214200	67.8786
Argentina	Peso	0.287967	0.349650	19.5468
Brazil	Real	0.349008	0.423765	23.6902
Denmark	Kroner	0.133989	0.162689	9.0950
India	Rupee	0.018951	0.023010	1.2864
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.216745	0.263172	14.7124
Mexico	New Peso	0.077533	0.094140	5.2628
New Zealand	Dollar	0.553859	0.672495	37.5952
South Africa	Rand	0.123173	0.149557	8.3608
Korea	Won	0.000791	0.000960	0.0537
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.025826	0.031358	1.7530

State firms . . .

From page B1

PNOC Shipping and Transport Corp. (P1.08 million), National Electrification Administration (P95,000), Philippine Center for Economic Development (P38,000), GY Real Estate Inc. (P18,000), and Pinagkaisa Realty Corp. (P11,000).

The DOF also reported that last year, state-owned firms that posted the highest net income included DBP with P3.4 billion; Land Bank, P2.25 billion; and Philippine Port Authority, P1.96 billion.

Although it has already surpassed its dividend collection target for the year, the DOF still urged state-owned firms, especially the profitable ones, to further increase their contributions to the government.

Finance Secretary Margarito Teves said higher dividend collection was one of the DOF's strategies to somehow compensate the lost potential revenues from the suspension of the Expanded Value Added Tax Law.

Another measure cited was the across-the-board one-percentage point increase in import duties, a move seen to generate P14.6 billion in incremental revenues a year. The DOF also said the government would suspend the plan of lowering the oil tariff to 3 percent (from the present 5 percent) while the VAT remained suspended.

Teves said the DOF was hoping the Supreme Court would soon lift the temporary restraining order it imposed on the VAT law, saying that among the available fiscal measures, it had the highest revenue potential.

Finance chief . . .

From page B1

even at a time of rising oil and commodity prices, in its desire to cover its huge budget deficit.

Despite the country's huge debts, the DOF used to reject calls for a debt relief. Former Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima, who resigned last July 8 together with nine other administration officials, said seeking debt relief could adversely affect the country's capability to access future loans.

The World Bank earlier discouraged the Philippines from talking about debt relief, saying it was counterproductive. World Bank country director Joachim von Amsberg also said that the Philippines, unlike African countries, was not yet in a situation where it needed debt relief.

"The Philippines has access to debt markets. The strategy now is how to get the best access. But with African countries, you're talking of countries that have practically no access to markets," Amsberg said.

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100,000 - 499,999	5.25%	5.375%	5.50%	5.75%
500,000 - 999,999	5.50%	5.625%	5.75%	6.00%
1,000,000 - 2,499,999	5.75%	5.875%	6.00%	6.25%
2,500,000 - 4,999,999	6.00%	6.125%	6.25%	6.50%
5,000,000 - 9,999,999	6.25%	6.375%	6.50%	6.75%
10,000,000 and above	6.50%	6.625%	6.75%	7.00%

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SHARES AVAILABLE

CLUB	SELLER	BUYER
Alabang Country Club A/B*	Pls Call	1,170,000*
Alta Vista Corp	-	300,000
Baguio Country Club	Pls. Call	530,000
Calatagan Golf	40,000	
Camp John Hay	-	140,000
Canyon Woods	125,000	
Capitol Hills	90,000	
Cebu Country Club	1,500,000	
Celebrity Sports	120,000	100,000
City Sports Club Cebu	Pls Call	
Club Filipino	Pls Call	
Eagleridge A/B*/C**	190,000/250,000*/Pls. Call**	150,000
Eastridge A/B*	Pls Call	
Evercrest	65,000	
Forest Hills A/B*/C**	130,000/200,000*	
Luisita Golf	350,000	
Manila Golf Corporate	11,500,000	
Manila Golf Individual	11,400,000	
Manila Polo	2,250,000	2,100,000
Manila Southwoods A/B*	380,000	370,000/600,000*
Makati Sports Club	200,000	170,000
Metropolitan Club A/B*	120,000/150,000*	
Mimosa C2/C3*	Pls Call	Pls Call
Mt. Malarayat A	230,000	180,000
Orchard A/B*/C**	170,000/Pls. Call*/380,000**	150,000/350,000**
Puerto Azul	80,000	-
Punta Fuego	Pls Call	
Quezon City Sports Club	150,000	130,000
Riviera Golf A/B*/C**	90,000/180,000*/230,000**	-
Riviera Sports	45,000	-
Rockwell Leisure Club	280,000	-
Royale Tagaytay CC	80,000	-
Sherwood A/C**	70,000/180,000**	-
Sta. Elena Golf A/B*	1,250,000/1,500,000*	1,100,000
The Palms Country Club	550,000	-
Tagaytay Country Club	380,000	-
Tagaytay Highlands	Pls Call	650,000
Tagaytay Midlands	680,000	-
The Country Club	2,000,000	-
Tower Club	Pls Call	-
Valley Golf	240,000	-
Valle Verde Ind	120,000	-
Wack Wack Golf	6,500,000	-

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GG & A Club Shares
SEC License Broker #007575 * As of July 26, 2005

CLUB	SELLER	BUYER
Alabang Country Club "A" (Filipino)	1,100,000	-
Alabang Country Club "B" (Foreigner)	1,200,000	1,075,000
Baguio Country Club	550,000	520,000
Calatagan Golf Club "A"	40,000	-
Calatagan Golf Club "B"	-	70,000
Camp John Hay	170,000	-
Canlubang	500,000	400,000
Canyon Woods	125,000	-
Capitol Hills	80,000	-
Cebu Country Club	1,500,000	1,200,000
Celebrity Sports Club	120,000	-
Club Filipino	100,000	-
Eagleridge "A"/"B"/"C"	Please Call	Please Call
Forest Hills "A"	130,000	100,000
Forest Hills "B"	200,000	-
Forest Hills "C"	200,000	-
Luisita Golf	350,000	300,000
Makati Sports Club "A"	200,000	165,000
Makati Sports Club "B"	230,000	-
Manila Golf (Corporate)	-	11,000,000
Manila Golf (Individual)	-	11,000,000
Manila Polo	2,200,000	2,100,000
Manila Southwoods "A"	350,000	300,000
Manila Southwoods "B"	-	680,000
Manila Yacht Club	400,000	300,000
Metroclub "A"	130,000	-
Mimosa (Individual)	-	130,000
Mimosa (Corporate)	-	330,000
Mt. Malarayat Gold "A"	190,000	-
Mt. Malarayat Gold "C"	300,000	280,000
Orchard Golf Club "A"	210,000	170,000
Orchard Golf Club "B"	280,000	-
Orchard Golf Club "C"	350,000	-
Quezon City Sports Club	150,000	-
Spa & Lodge	600,000	500,000
Sta. Elena "A"	1,200,000	1,100,000
Sta. Elena "B"	1,500,000	-
Subic Bay Yacht (Corporate)	170,000	-
Subic Bay Yacht (Individual)	100,000	-
Tagaytay Country Club	380,000	350,000
Tagaytay Highlands	750,000	650,000
Tagaytay Midlands	670,000	600,000
The Palms Country Club	530,000	500,000
Valle Verde (Individual)	130,000	-
Valle Verde (Corporate)	200,000	-
Valley Golf	230,000	200,000
Wack-Wack Golf Club	6,500,000	6,300,000

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ANVAYA COVE BEACH AND NATURE CLUB	Cash 30 (9% Discount) as of July 7, 2005
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Class C (Corp)	726,000

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announces the following trade events in Korea:

APEC BUSINESS PLAZA 2005
Date : August 28~31
Venue : Daegu, Korea
Exhibit : autoparts, car accessories, electrical/ electronic items, Medical /Healthcare/Optical products, building/ constructions materials, Robot/ automation systems, home appliances, packaging machines,agricultural/food processing m/c, beverages machineries /equipments, computer softwares, vessel parts, pumps/valves, textiles, etc.
Incentives: 4- night hotel accommodations free for attendees

****

KOREA INTERNATIONAL LIVESTOCK EXPO 2005 (KISTOCK)
Date : August 31 ~ Sept. 2
Venue : KOTREX, Daejeon, Korea
Exhibit: animal feed/additives, feeding/watering equipment, stock breeder, health/hygiene products depollution/animal waste treatment, incubators, meat/food processing equipment and etc.
Incentives: 3-night hotel accommodations free for attendees.

****

THE 6TH DAEGU INT'L AUTOMATIC MACHINERY & TOOL EXHIBITION 2005
Date : September 7~10
Venue : EXCO, Daegu, Korea
Exhibit : FA systems, measuring control, robot, oil /air pressure, IT enterprise, M CAD,CAM,CAE, tools/metal working machine, materials handling environmental facility, refrigeration/airconditioning
Incentives: 2-night hotel accommodations free for attendees.

****

ASIA SCIENCE & LABORATORY INSTRUMENT EXHIBITION (ASSE/ANALAB 2005)
Date : September 7~9
Venue : KOTREX, Daejeon, Korea
Exhibit: all science and laboratory instrument/eqpt. optical image analysis,test/measurement tech.,etc.
Incentives : 2-night hotel accommodations free.

DAEGU-GYEONGBUK EXPORT PLAZA
Date : September 25~28
Venue : DEXCO, Daegu, Korea
Exhibit : Auto parts and accessories
Incentive: 3-night hotel accommodations free for attendees.

****

JEONJU COMPUTER GAME EXPO
Date : October 1~3
Venue : Jeonju, Korea
Exhibit: computer games, mobile contents, On-Line games,accessories and other related items.
Incentives: 2-night hotel accommodations free for attendees.

****

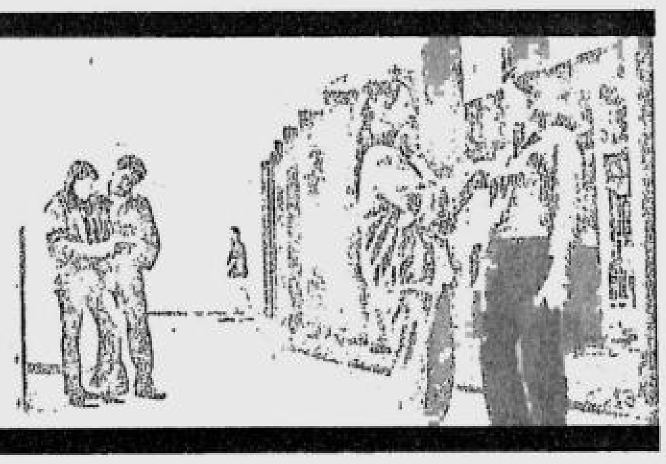
THE AGRICULTURAL MACHINERY & SEED SHOW (TAMAS 2005)
Date : November 15~18
Venue : KOTREX, Daejeon, Korea
Exhibit : agricultural machineries and equipments, greenhouse equipments, parts, seeds, fertilizers, and etc.
Incentives: 2-night hotel accommodations free for attendees.

****

KOREA ELECTRONICS SHOW 2005
Date : October 11~15
Venue : KINTEX, Goyang, Korea
Exhibit : Home Entertainment, PC and personal digital-info-devices such as PDA, wireless info terminal,internet terminal,MP3, game platform; Network Computing Products such as server, work station, client terminal display, projector, OA equipment, LAN/WAN eqpt., IP equipment,communication terminal; communication/Broadcasting Equipment and terminals; Industrial Electronic Goods; electronic Parts/Materials such as semiconductors, displays nd other electronic parts and materials.

Businessmen who are interested to attend any of the above events should register on or before August 5, 2005.
Pls. call 893-1183/893-3244/ 812-4079 / Fax. 817-3369, ask for Ms. Cecile or Ms. Armi for further details.

TeleTech.



A global company develops its next generation of leaders from within

TeleTech builds a tradition of human resource development, setting a benchmark for other companies

TeleTech is a global provider of customer management and business process outsourced solutions. "Being in the customer service industry, we believe that our people are our greatest asset. Therefore, we invest in our employees by helping them develop advanced skills and fully recognizing their contributions," said Craig Reines, vice president and general manager of Philippine operations.

TeleTech opened its first facility in Fort Bonifacio in 2001. At that time, the Philippines was only beginning to be acknowledged as a desirable location for outsourced contact centers.

From an 800-seat customer management facility in Fort Bonifacio, TeleTech rapidly grew its operations, opening a second site in Bay City, Pasay City in 2004, and a third site in Novaliches, Quezon City early in 2005. TeleTech's Pasay City facility sits on an 8,500 square meter area, with more than 1,200 workstations. The Novaliches customer management center (CMC) remains TeleTech's biggest site today with more than 9,200 square meters of floor area and 1,500 workstations. All of TeleTech's facilities have comprehensive, state-of-the-art technology solutions that ensure high quality and round-the-clock interactions with clients all over the world.

Local Talent, Global Reach

Craig Reines described the company's vast expansion in the country as both dramatic and exciting. "In 2004, TeleTech in the Philippines grew by 550 percent in less than 6 months, ranking as the most aggressive and successful CMC launch accomplished in the history of our company. But the growth did not stop in June 2004. We added more projects and signed up more client contracts, completed an extension to our Pasay City building, and added hundreds of employees. By the end of 2004, both the Pasay City and Fort Bonifacio CMCs were completely sold out. This compelled us to look for new space and extend our footprint in the Philippines," Reines explained.

"We owe our success in this country to the dedication and commitment to high standards of our employees. In return, we are constantly coming up with fresh ideas to demonstrate our appreciation through many rewards and recognition programs," said Phil Hidalgo, vice president of human resources.

Brian Wenrick, site director of Pasay CMC, says the company supports and encourages employee recognition programs. "We have a bi-annual awards program for employees and teams with outstanding performances. Each month, a special events committee designs activities to foster camaraderie and employee-management interaction,' he asserted. "However, it's not all just merriment and gimmicks. We also instill in our employees social awareness. We have embarked on civic and charity projects such as providing scholarships for needy students, building homes through Gawad Kalinga, and planting trees to reforest the La Mesa watershed," explained Wenrick.

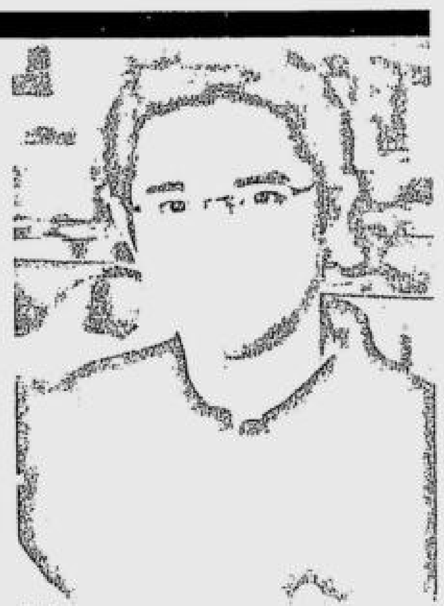
TeleTech heavily invests in training and developing its people. "We offer a lot of training courses, we do daily coaching activities, and we support team-building programs across the various departments. Being in a relatively young industry, people can gain a tremendous amount of knowledge and experience from training, coaching, and mentoring," according to Wenrick.

In May this year, the company opened the gates of TeleTech University. The University, a pioneering initiative in the industry, provides a web-based learning system with courses designed to upgrade the knowledge and skills of CSRs, supervisors and management positions.

TeleTech University students can access courses on-line, get their grades at the

GLOBAL/ B8

CRAIG Reines, vice president and general manager of Philippine operations. Craig heads a multicultural management team that has the passion and determination to grow TeleTech's business in the country.



AJ Maralit, site director, Novaliches customer management center

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Success story

Integrated HP business desktop solution increases TeleTech's productivity

Overview

Manila-based call center implements an integrated HP business desktop solution that uses less space and improves the work environment.

U.S.-headquartered TeleTech is a leading full-service provider of strategic customer management solutions, founded in 1982. It competes in a very demanding business of serving, and managing, customers' expectations. TeleTech has to ensure that it provides clients' customers with high-quality and consistent service-from the moment they start their relationship to every interaction they have afterward.

TeleTech operates customer service management centers in 15 countries. One of its key centers of operation is Manila, the capital of the Philippines, thanks to the Philippines' large pool of fluent English-speaking graduates and moderate wage rates.

Challenge

As part of its strategy to stay ahead, TeleTech in Manila had invested in providing its call center executives with new state-of-the-art IT infrastructure, when it shifted to its new premise. It not only wanted to tap into the latest technologies to boost productivity and create new sources of revenue, but it was keen to dramatically improve the working environment and comfort level of its call center executives. They have to attend to queries via telephone or email or Web chat for hours at a stretch. All this is done sitting, staring into a PC screen. This makes it imperative that they are given a friendly and comfortable environment to work in.

And, as part of this effort to create a soothing environment, the ergonomics of the equipment that these executives use-the furniture and the PC-needs to be so designed to give these executives the maximum comfort they deserve.

Solution

After reviewing several solutions, TeleTech decided to invest in 285 HP Integrated Work Centers and the HP Compaq Business Desktop d530 ultra-slim desktops with the 17-inch HP Flat Panel Monitor L1730 for its new Contact Management Center (CMC) in Manila. The HP Integrated Work Center converts the d530 ultra-slim desktop and the 17-inch L1730 into a single space-saving unit. Showing that it was ready to embrace new technology to enhance the work environment, Teletech became the first company in Asia Pacific to purchase the HP Integrated Work Centers. These machines were installed in November 2003, replacing the Compaq Deskpros it had been using. A remarkable feat that the d530 has brought to this new premise is that, despite the smaller desks that the executives have been given, they now enjoy more unoccupied table space area and have less cable clutter to deal with. They also enjoy a more comfortable environment thanks to the ergonomical design of HP's products. All this is attributable to the d530's compact size and integrated features. These characteristics, including the carry handle for easy mobility, have also enabled TeleTech to optimize the use of its floor space, enabling it to put in more help desks, thus boosting revenue. "The compact size of the d530 integrated unit has enabled us to reduce the footprint area of the desks in the CMC," says Charles Widdis, TeleTech's IT Director at Manila. "The d530 comes as a single unit, so we don't have to mess around with clutters of cable or a large monitor that can take up to a quarter of desk stop space."

Results

First, TeleTech has been able to increase the number of workstations by 15 percent. The d530's smaller size means the unit is portable and mobile. Its handle makes the PC easy to move around. The compact size, however, has not been the only reason why TeleTech selected this machine. "This PC is cost effective, practical and reliable," says Charles Widdis. Furthermore, this solution has enabled TeleTech to support a larger number of workstations with a smaller IT support staff, as compared with previously. "We did not want a solution that could potentially need a lot more manpower support." It's a stable machine as well. "The d530 is stable because we only need to select a single solution, confident that we will only have to support one base model. The devices themselves are stable and reliable, rarely requiring complex technical support." This makes it easier and less expensive to support, over the long term. There are other benefits as well. "The HP Compaq d530's flat screen TFT and smaller size have reduced heat output in the work environment and, at the same time, lowered power consumption, when compared with a conventional Mini-Tower and CRT monitor. This translates to lower capital spending and lower operating costs on electricity and air conditioning," says Charles Widdis.

The employees think the HP Compaq d530 is cool. "They like its looks and its swiveling monitor which contributes to making this among the most user friendly PCs they have ever used," explains Charles Widdis. In addition, the combination of Pentium 4 and MS Windows XP makes the d530 fast as well...our staff have noticed this." It boasts the new Intel® 865G chipset, and the Intel® Pentium® 4 processor. The HP Compaq d530 includes Intel Extreme II Graphics, Intel integrated audio, internal speaker, and a choice of CD-ROM, CDRW, DVD-ROM, or DVD+R/RW. Multimedia and storage options are also available. All in all, HP has contributed to making TeleTech Manila a friendly CMC to work in. "We have now set the standard for the best designed CMC in the enterprise," says Charles Widdis. But a superior work environment has not been the only gain. "We have increased revenue and cut operational expenses."

TeleTech was so pleased with the HP Business desktop solution and the benefits it provided that the company has placed orders for another 250 units subsequently. "HP's products have allowed us to have a better designed Contact Management Center (CMC). TeleTech in Manila has now set the standard for the best designed CMC in the enterprise. We have achieved a superior design, increased revenue and cut operating costs."

- Charles Widdis

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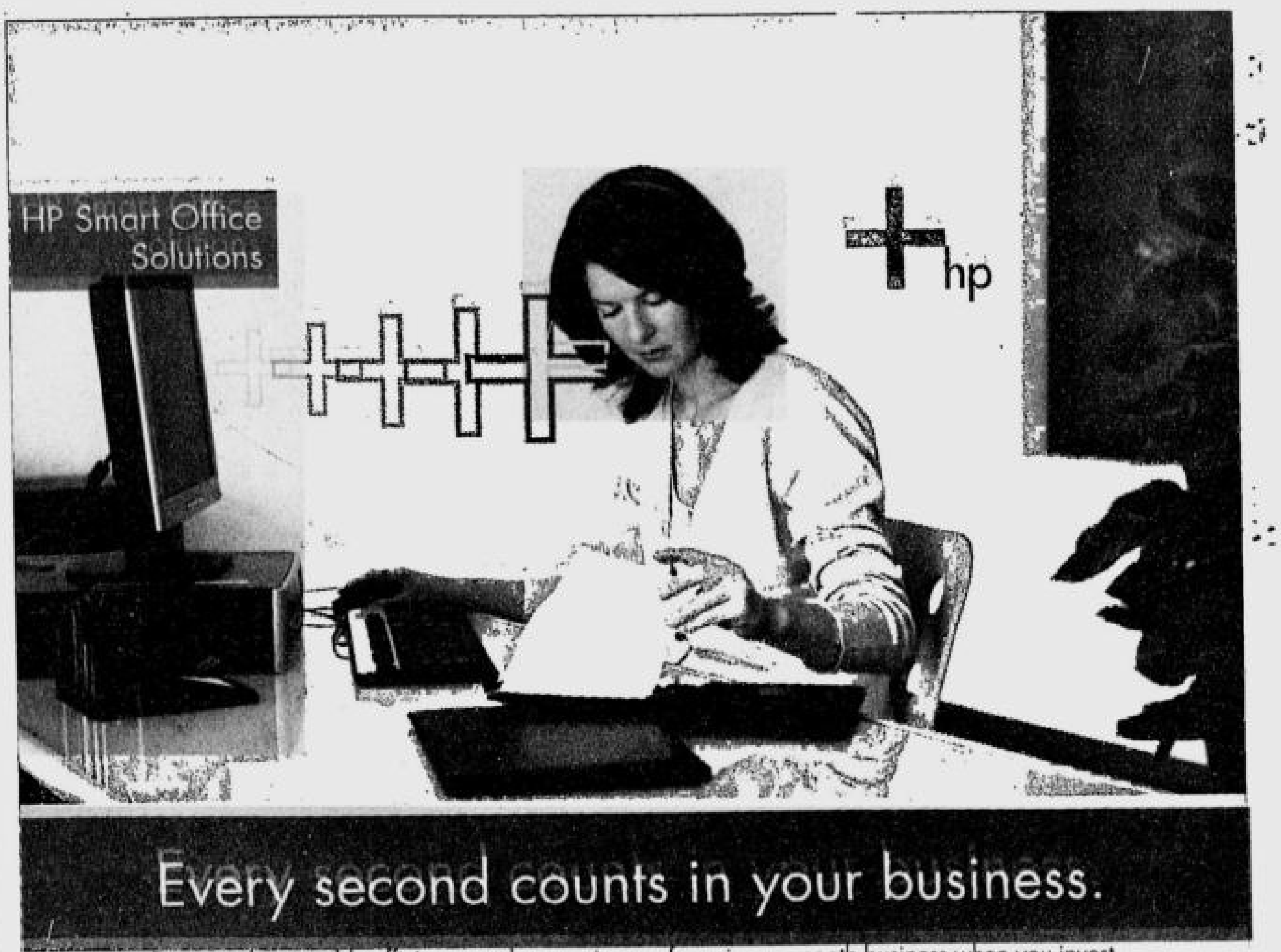
5982-3771EEP, 01/2004

Challenge

- Reducing operational costs. oIncreasing number of workstations.
- Improving the friendliness of the work environment. Solution Results
- An integrated HP business desktop solution that requires smaller footprint.
- An integrated PC system with less cable clutter to deal with.
- HP Flat Panel Monitor produces less heat: lower electricity use and less demand on air conditioning.
- Number of customer service workstations increased by 15percent.
- Higher Employee morale.
- Lower electricity bills contribute to lower operational costs.
- A stable and reliable solution that gives customersa sense of comfort.
- A better designed Contact Management Center (CMC).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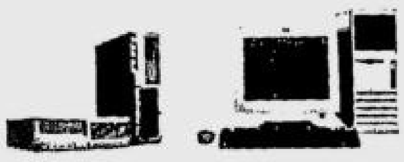

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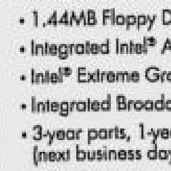

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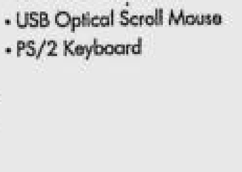

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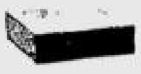

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A global company develops its next generation of leaders from within

From page B6

The company's focus on training young leaders and achievers has benefited Alejandro 'AJ' Maralit, the first Filipino site director assigned at the Novaliches customer management center.

TELETECH Roxas customer management center raised funds on Valentine's Day for Elsie Gaches Village, a home for mentally challenged people. Brian Wenrick (center) led the employees during the turn over of sacks of rice, bed materials, and medicines, for the Elsie Gaches Village residents.

end of each course, and are awarded certificates upon completion of a course or program. Seset Lopez, who heads TeleTech University in the Philippines, believes "this is a pretty cool way of self-improvement and career advancement while on-the-job. It shows our company's sincere desire to grow our employees on a professional level."

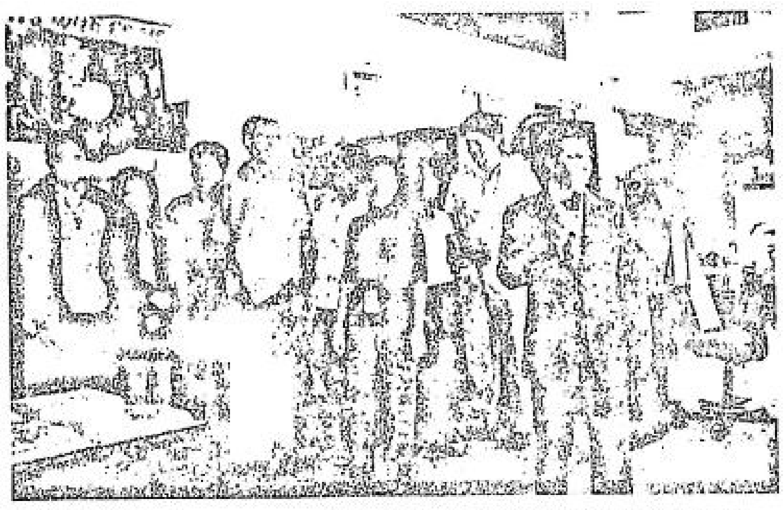
The company's focus on training young leaders and achievers has benefited Alejandro "AJ" Maralit, the first Filipino site director assigned at the Novaliches customer management center.

Youthful looking and jovial, Maralit has the mind set of a mature business executive. He has been in the customer service industry right after graduating from La Salle University-College of St. Benilde.

After working in a five-star hotel and a Filipino contact center, Maralit says he found his niche in TeleTech. "I've been with TeleTech for more than three years and my experience has been equivalent to earning an MBA degree on the job!" On his new role in the company, AJ stated "My objective is to build a local team of top-notch individuals who will ensure the success of the company by leveraging the Filipino talent with TeleTech's global best practices."

An optimist and an idealist, AJ is inspired by the management principles of gurus such as John Maxwell, Jack Welch, Stephen Covey, and Kenneth Blanchard. He believes, "everything rises and falls on leadership," quoting John Maxwell on how leadership should be perceived. "Create a strong leadership team that will carry your organization from success to success. Do not be afraid to take risks with people. As long as these risks are done in a smart way and a support structure put in place, then the rewards can potentially be huge." Finally, "Challenge your own comfort zone."

As the Philippines poises for the tremendous opportunities in the global business process outsourcing business, TeleTech has its feet firmly on the ground and ready to provide the much-needed push for the country. By developing and promoting its Filipino employees, a global leader like TeleTech has proven that the Filipino talent is world-class.



EMPLOYEE and management interaction abound in TeleTech such as the quarterly program 'Late Night with Craig', a TV format meeting between the GM and employees.

Working as a member of a 'big' team

As with any job, there are good days and not-so-good days at work. But Chris says they always look at the humorous side of their 'bad days'.

TEAM leader Chris Navarrete flashes the assured smile of someone confident in his TeleTech role. During the photo shoot for this feature, he gamely crosses his arms, moves his chin a little way up, grinning to the hoots and cheers of nearby Customer Service Representatives or CSRs who are used to his jovial presence in the colorful TeleTech office.

As a team leader, Chris works with an energetic team of 18 CSRs, each with their individual personality. In a typical office day, 60 percent of his time is spent managing and coaching these agents to help them "achieve their metrics." But unlike most contact center employees, Chris reports for work at 5:30 in the morning and stays until 2:30 in the afternoon.

"There's a big difference when you work in a contact center," Chris says. "A major change for people is adapting to the schedule. Our clients work at the other side of the world. While the rest of the Philippines sleep, we are wide awake and working. As a result, I've changed all my habits due to my work schedule."

Chris says another major adjustment was the work place "culture" and environment. "Because we work with North American clients, we need to be familiar with their customs and practices, language, and, geography," Chris explains. "Our management makes it so easy for us to learn the important stuff. For example, we have film showings of American movies, magazines published in the States, and TV programs shown live from the U.S." Chris adds.

As with any job, there are good days and not-so-good days at work. But Chris says they always look at the humorous side of their "bad days". He recalls this awkward incident which clearly shows some cultural divide, "We interact with American clients right? Sometimes you try to establish rapport with a client by cracking a joke and the client doesn't get it. Then, we move back to official business and do a graceful segue. The same is true for us. Some American clients with good PR try to break a joke or two during a call and because we don't realize that it was a joke, we don't laugh. When this happens, some clients express surprise that we didn't get the joke. That takes a little more education," says an amused Chris.

As a team leader, Chris Navarrete's main responsibility is to strengthen his team's esprit de corps, tracking each one's professional growth. He says it takes a certain discipline and maturity to become a team leader. At the top of the list of characteristics that team leaders should have are patience and a balanced attitude toward work, according to Chris.

"When it's work, it's work, but you also have to know when to stop and have fun," he explains. "At TeleTech, fun can be had in many different ways. The company is quite generous with incentives, rewards, and recognition. "We have the reward and recognition systems in place and the role of team leaders like me is to guide our CSRs to earn those rewards and their corresponding recognition," says Chris.

Chris Navarrete likens his job to that of a basketball coach.

"Michael Jordan once said that with talented players you can win games, but with teamwork, you will be able to win championships. For TeleTech, it's the same thing: Everyone works in a team so teamwork is essential."

A turned around world

Sheila sees herself working for TeleTech for a long time. 'There are so many opportunities for growth and development here.'

FOR TeleTech senior customer service representative (CSR) Sheila Mae Jancon, her world has turned completely around. The things she used to do during the day, she now does at night - sleeping during the day and working in the evening.

Welcome to the contact center environment.

Sheila has been in the contact center industry for quite some time and her biological clock has adjusted well to her now reversed daily routine.

"It helps that I don't require a lot of sleep at night," she says of her adaptability to contact center work life. In fact, Sheila's world and that of other contact center employees have spawned a totally different lifestyle throughout the Philippines.

Sheila's team in the office usually socializes on weekends and during their days off. Aside from coffee shops, their favorite meeting places are videoke outlets and the malls.

"On our days off, we like to go to Redbox at Greenbelt (Makati City) where we belt out songs and give our vocal chords a good work-out. Sometimes after work, we just want to spend a little more time with office mates. So we go to Blue Wave Mall, a two-minute drive from TeleTech. Socializing with each other provides stress relief after a long day (or night) of work," explains Sheila.

The day of her interview, Sheila scheduled a round of badminton game with friends after their shift ended at 8 a.m. TeleTech encourages sports activities for employees as part of the company's holistic approach to employee development. Every year, the company hosts a sports fest and Sheila has been part of a team that competed in past sports fests. "TeleTech has provided us with opportunities to help us grow both as professionals and as individuals. I am still amazed at the continuous improvements of the company to create a work environment both professional and fun," she muses.

As a senior CSR, Sheila's time is spent between taking calls and supporting and coaching other CSRs. "We work in teams so teamwork is very important in order for us to achieve our service levels and performance standards," according to her. "I'm glad that TeleTech has honed my coaching and mentoring skills because I an more confident and well-equipped to help my team achieve their full potential, too. In working in TeleTech, I have discovered an ability to mentor and be a role model to my co-employees," points out Sheila.

Sheila sees herself working for TeleTech for a long time. "There are so many opportunities for growth and development here. With the proper training and the right attitude, I know I can make my mark here. And, I like my co-workers. In fact, they have become my best friends."

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2%w/o taking car 6560140

2% w/o Taking Car 7262780

2% w/o taking car 7880183-84

2% w/oTaking Car 7221021

2% w/oTaking Car 8959454

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PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE is given that the estate of the late **FELICISIMO CIEGO** was extrajudicially settled with SPA on May 26, 2005 per Doc. No. 466, Page 95, Book 19, Series of 2005 of Notary Public Jesus Bongon of Pasay City.
(PDI - July 12, 19 & 26, 2005)

NOTICE OF EXTRA-JUDICIAL SETTLEMENT
Notice is hereby given that the intestate estate of AH CHIN NG who died on August 31, 2003 in Baguio City was settled by his heirs as per Extrajudicial Settlement entered as Document Number 282, Page Number 57, Book No. XI. Series of 2003 of the Notarial Registry of Atty. Mia Joy C. Oallares-Cawed.
(PDI–July 19, 26 & Aug 2, 2005)

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Cebu Maritime Regional Office
Ground Floor CCCI Center, cor. 11th & 13th Avenues,
North Reclamation Area, Cebu City

Case No. CMRO 05-015

RE: Application for Amendment of Certificate of Public Convenience (CPC) for Permanent Addition of a Route/Port/Link pursuant to Republic Act no. 9295 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations.

OCEAN FAST FERRIES, INC.,
Applicant.
x--x

ORDER

This refers to the Application for Amendment of Certificate of Public Convenience (CPC) on the permanent addition of route/port/link and change of sailing frequency(ies) schedule to effect:

Departure			Arrival		
Port	Day	Time	Port	Day	Time
Cebu	Daily	6:00 AM	Tagbilaran	Daily	7:40 AM
Tagbilaran	Daily	8.00 AM	Larena	Daily	9:40 AM
Larena	Daily	10:00 AM	Dumaguete	Daily	10.45 AM
Dumaguete	Daily	11:00 AM	Tagbilaran	Daily	12.30 PM
Tagbilaran	Daily	1:05 PM	Cebu	Daily	2.45 PM
Cebu	Daily	3:30 PM	Tagbilaran	Daily	5.00 PM
Tagbilaran	Daily	6:00 PM	Cebu	Daily	7.30 PM
Cebu	Daily	6:30 AM	Tagbilaran	Daily	8:10 AM
Tagbilaran	Daily	8.30 AM	Dumaguete	Daily	10.00 AM
Dumaguete	Daily	10.30 AM	Dapitan	Daily	12:40 PM
Dapitan	Daily	1:00 PM	Dumaguete	Daily	2:40 PM
Dumaguete	Daily	3:30 PM	Tagbilaran	Daily	5:00 PM
Tagbilaran	Daily	5:30 PM	Cebu	Daily	7:10 PM
Cebu	Daily	8:00 AM	Maasin	Daily	10:40 PM
Maasin	Daily	11.00 AM	Surigao	Daily	12:30 PM
Surigao	Daily	1:00 PM	Maasin	Daily	2.30 PM
Maasin	Daily	3:00 PM	Cebu	Daily	5:40 PM
Larena	Daily	5:50 AM	Tagbilaran	Daily	7:10 AM
Tagbilaran	Daily	7:35 AM	Cebu	Daily	9:00 AM
Cebu	Daily	9:30 AM	Tagbilaran	Daily	11:10 AM
Tagbilaran	Daily	11:30 AM	Cebu	Daily	1:10 PM
Cebu	Daily	1:30 PM	Tagbilaran	Daily	3:00 PM
Tagbilaran	Daily	3:30 PM	Cebu	Daily	5:00 PM
Cebu	Daily	5:30 PM	Tagbilaran	Daily	7:00 PM
Tagbilaran	Daily	7:20 PM	Larena	Daily	8:40 PM
Hilongos	Daily	6:00 AM	Cebu	Daily	8:00 AM
Cebu	Daily	8:30 AM	Tubigon	Daily	9:30 AM
Tubigon	Daily	9:50 AM	Cebu	Daily	10:50 AM
Cebu	Daily	11:10 AM	Camotes	Daily	12:40 PM
Camotes	Daily	1:00 PM	Cebu	Daily	2:30 PM
Cebu	Daily	3:00 PM	Tubigon	Daily	4:00 PM
Tubigon	Daily	4:20 PM	Cebu	Daily	5:20 PM
Cebu	Daily	5:40 PM	Hilongos	Daily	7:50 PM
Larena	Daily	6:00 AM	Dumaguete	Daily	6:50 AM
Dumaguete	Daily	7:10 AM	Tagbilaran	Daily	8.50 AM
Tagbilaran	Daily	9:10 AM	Cebu	Daily	10.50 AM
Cebu	Daily	11:10 AM	Tagbilaran	Daily	12.50 PM
Tagbilaran	Daily	1:10 PM	Cebu	Daily	2.50 PM
Cebu	Daily	3:20 PM	Tagbilaran	Daily	5.00 PM
Tagbilaran	Daily	5:20 PM	Dumaguete	Daily	7.00 PM
Dumaguete	Daily	7:20 PM	Larena	Daily	8.10 AM
Hilongos	Daily	6:00 AM	Cebu	Daily	8.20 AM
Cebu	Daily	9:00 AM	Tagbilaran	Daily	10.40 AM
Tagbilaran	Daily	11:10 AM	Cebu	Daily	12.50 PM
Cebu	Daily	1:20 PM	Tagbilaran	Daily	3.00 PM
Tagbilaran	Daily	3:20 PM	Cebu	Daily	7:10 PM
Cebu	Daily	5.30 PM	Tagbilaran	Daily	7:10 PM
Tagbilaran	Daily	7:35 AM	Cebu	Daily	9:15 AM
Cebu	Daily	5:30 PM	Hilongos	Daily	7:50 PM

* The schedules prescribed for application in Iloilo-Bredco 2, Bacolod and vice versa route as per Decision dated 14 June 2005 shall remain the same.

Rates on a per Link Basis	
LINKS	RATES
Cebu City - Tubigon, Bohol	P 350.00
Bredco 2, Bacolod City - Iloilo City	P 350.00
Hilongos, Leyte - Cebu City	P 700.00
Cebu - Tagbilaran	P 590.00
Cebu - Larena	P 800.00
Tagbilaran - Larena	P 650.00
Cebu - Plandel	P 1,150.00
Larena - Plandel	P 700.00
Plandel - Tagbilaran	P 730.00
Cebu - Dumaguete	P 800.00
Cebu - Camotes	P 500.00
Dumaguete - Tagbilaran	P 600.00
Cebu - Dapital	P 1,150.00
Dumaguete - Dapitan	P 600.00
Cebu - Massin	P 800.00
Cebu - Surigao	P 1,150.00
Maasin - Surigao	P 800.00
Larena - Dumaguete	P 350.00
Tagbilaran - Dapitan	P 730.00

The Applicant shall cause then publication of this order once in a newspaper once in any of the five (5) major newspaper of national circulation in the Philippines.

The Applicant shall likewise simultaneously cause the posting of this Order in a conspicuous place at the affected ports, ships Applicant's premises, passengers terminal/s and ticketing offices as applicable.

The Applicant shall present the jurisdictional, qualification and documentary requirements in a summary proceeding to be conducted on July 28, 2005 at 2:00 p.m. at the Hearing Room, Cebu Maritime Regional Office, Ground Floor, CCCI Bldg., cor. 11th and 13th Avenues, North Reclamation Area, Cebu City which is within seven (7) days from the date of publication/posting.

The Applicant shall be required to make a written Formal Offer of Evidence (FOE) Afterwhich, the application is deemed submitted for resolution/decision.

WITNESS, the Honorable Administrator, VICENTE T. SUAZO, Jr. this 21st day of July 2005 at Cebu City, Philippines.

(Sgd.) GLENN G. CABAÑEZ
Regional Director

(PDI--July 26, 2005)

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DR. VERDADES PANILA JIMENEZ

Peacefully joined her Creator on July 25, 2005 at the age of 74.

Her beloved husband **Atty. Augusto S. Jimenez**; children and in-laws, **Belle** and **Tim**, **Bambi** and **Zach**, **Jun** and **Lou**; grandchildren **Carl**, **Abby**, **Jess**, **Mia** and **Tom**; and sisters, **Winnie** and **Rhoda**, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at La Funeraria Paz, G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment to be announced later.

DEATH NOTICES

JOSE P. MECENAS, SR.

Has joined his Creator and wife, Natividad Ronquillo (†) on July 24, 2005 at the age of 78.

His remains lie in state at Chapel L, La Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City.

Cremation will be at Paz Crematory on July 28, 2005.

ENGR. JOSE A. MACARUBBO

Peacefully passed away at the Memorial Medical Center in Modesto, California on July 17, 2005 at the age of 79.

Interment will be on July 27, 2005 at the Eternal Gardens Memorial Park.

SPO4 RODOLFO DELA ROSA DUANAN

Peacefully joined his Creator on July 20, 2005 at the age of 48.

Interment will be at 10 a.m. today at the Libingan ng Mga Bayani, Fort Bonifacio, Makati City.

PETRA DE JOYA REYES

Now peacefully rests in the grace and goodness of our Lord.

Her remains lie in state at the Immaculate Conception Mortuary, Batangas, City.

Interment will be on July 27, 2005 at the Batangas City Catholic Cemetery.

NELLIE REYES TOLENTINO

Now peacefully rests in peace in the grace and goodness of our Lord.

Her remains lie in state at the Immaculate Conception Mortuary, Batangas, City.

Interment will be on July 27, 2005 at the Batangas City Catholic Cemetery.

An obituary with a picture can be a fitting tribute to your departed loved one.

Always caring...
INQUIRER OBITUARIES

OBITUARY REQUIREMENTS:

❶ Copy of Death Certificate;
❷ Any identification document (I.D.)

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Brief Description of Goods	Various Training and Testing Equipment (NDFTES-01)
Loan Number	NDF Credit - 331

1. The Government of the Philippines (GOP) has received a credit from Nordic Development Fund (NDF) towards the cost of the Technical Education and Skills Development Project (TESDP) being carried out by the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA). It intends to apply this credit for payments under the contract for **Nine (9) Bid Lots for the Supply, Delivery, Installation and Commissioning of Training/Testing Equipment to Identified TESDP Beneficiary Institutions.**
2. **The Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA)** now invites Bids from eligible Bidders for **Training & Testing Packages for Various Occupational Sectors, with an Aggregate Project Cost of Approximately Five Million Seven Hundred Fourteen Thousand U.S. Dollars (US Dollars 5.714 Million)**. Delivery of the Goods to the TESDP institutional sites shall be one hundred twenty (120) calendar days from date of contract signing. The description of an eligible Bidder is contained in section II of the **Bidding Documents, ITB.**
3. Bidding will be conducted in accordance with relevant procedures for open competitive bidding as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act 9184 (R.A. 9184), otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act", to the extent consistent with Asian Development Bank's procurement procedures as defined in *"Guidelines for Procurement Under Asian Development Bank Loans"*, and is open to all Bidders from eligible source countries.
4. Interested Bidders may obtain further information from The Secretariat, Bids and Awards Committee of TESDA Central Office and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below during office hours (8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m., Monday - Friday) starting July 20, 2005.
5. A complete set of Bidding Documents (in hard and soft copies) may be purchased by interested Bidders from the address below and upon payment of a nonrefundable fee of P2,500.00 or its equivalent in US Dollars. The method of payment will be in cash or check payable to TESDA, said payment to be acknowledged through an official government receipt (O.R.). The Bidding Documents shall be received personally by the prospective Bidder or his authorized representative.
6. The TESDA Bids and Awards Committee will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all interested parties on August 12, 2005 at 10:00 a.m. at the address given below.
7. Bids and eligibility requirements must be delivered to the address below on or before 10:00 a.m., August 24, 2005. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in the form of cash, cashier or certified check, bank draft or irrevocable letter of credit in the amount equivalent to 1% of the total bid price and Bank Guarantee in the amount equivalent to 1.5% of the bid price payable to TESDA or an equivalent amount in freely convertible currency. Late Bids shall not be accepted.
8. Bid opening shall be held on August 24, 2005 at 10:00 a.m., at the address given below. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidder's representatives who chose to attend.
9. TESDA will be employing a single-stage, three envelope system of bidding, with Envelope No. 1 containing the Bidder's Eligibility requirements, Envelope No. 2 the Technical requirements and Envelope No. 3, the Bid Price. The Eligibility requirements and the Bidding Forms will be specified in the ITB and the Bidding Documents.
10. TESDA reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, to annul the bidding process, and reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without thereby incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders

TECHNICAL EDUCATION AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
SANTIAGO M. YABUT, JR.
Chairman, Bids and Award Committee
(Deputy Director General, FO)
TESDA Complex, TESDA Administration Building
East Service Road, South Luzon Expressway
Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City

Tel. No. 817-4076 to 80 and 888-5798
Fax No.: 817-9040
E-mail: psd_ocsa@tesda.gov.ph
Website: www.tesda.gov.ph

(Sgd.) SANTIAGO M. YABUT, JR.
Chairman, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI - July 19 & 26, 2005)

Top developers, banks, suppliers join Creba Expo 2005

Jaime A. Cura

Rosemarie C. Basa

TOP real estate developers, banks and other financing institutions led by Pag-IBIG Fund, contractors, home wares and building suppliers and allied industry groups are exhibitors at the Creba Expo 2005: "Our World Under One Roof" which open on Thursday at the World Trade Center on Roxas Blvd., Pasay City. This was announced by national president Jaime A. Cura and executive vice president Rosemarie C. Basa, who is overall Expo chair.

Developers and other industrial companies taking part in the Creba Expo are Alanda E-Realty, Almeda Inc, Asian Pacific, Benjamin Construction, Brittany, Cathay Land Inc, Central Country Estate, CityState Realty Development Corp, Crown Asia/Polar, DMCI Homes, Duraville Realty Development Corp, Elysian Field, Empire East Corp, Extraordinary-Earth and Style, Federal land, Fil-Estate, Filipinia Tagaytay Properties/RGV, Filinvest Land Inc, Fortune Star, Goldland, Heritage Park, Homeowners Development Corp, Houseland Realty, Jardine Land, JTKC Land Inc, Lexber Realty/Holiday, Loremar Realty, Loyola Group of Companies, Macro Properties, M. Abubakar Consolidated, Magnificent Ventures, Milha Inc, Moldex Realty, Masterpiece, Northwoods Realty Development Corp, One Asia Development Corp, PhilMay Property, Philtown Properties Inc, R-11 Builders, RJ Lhinet, Serve Quest, Sta. Elena Properties, State Properties Corp, Starland Properties Sunrise Holiday Concept, The Shang Grand Tower Corp, TGCI (Canyon Woods Residential), and V.V. Soliven Realty Development.

The exhibiting banks and institutions are Allied Bank, Allied Bank, Government Service Insurance System, Land Bank, LBC Development Bank, Maybank, Metrobank, National Home Mortgage Financing Corp, Pag-IBIG Fund, PS Bank, and Social Security System.

Hotels, resorts, suppliers, transport and related service companies are Bayview Hotel, Boracay Regency, Broline Com Corespaces, D.B. Internatioanl Sales & Services Team Asia, Directories Phils Corp, DSL Enterprises, Fedders Koppel Inc, Holcim Phils, Inca Plastics, Incuzxe Solutions, International Partners & Consulting Gorup, Jardine Davies, Jazmed Enterprises, Jett Water, Makati Foundry, MarketReach Distributors, Mariwasa Manufacturing Inc, Microdata Systems & Management, Multi-Line Design Systems, M2M Wireless Tech, Negros Navigation, Pars Builders, Paradise Chemical, Pearl Pacific World of Leisure, Philmetal Products, Philippine Ecopanel, Puyat Vinyl Products Inc, Southeast Asian Airlines, Spurway Enterprises, Steel Asia, Stoneage Industrial Financing Corp, Stoneworks Corp, Sycwin Coating and Wires Inc, Sysco Development Corp, Tanay Industries, Techno Asia Inc, Total Powerbox Solutions, Tyra's Marketing, Unipac, Vacation Club International, Wonder Island Resort, and Zapanta Dector.

Expo sponsors are Aero-Med Ambulance Transport, BCS Systems & Technologies/Vantage, Boysen Paints, Berde Plants Inc, Café Puro Jade Blend, CIGG Trade International Corp, Corespsance, Cypress-Bomanite, Davies Paints, D>B International Sales & Services/Team Asia, Fundador Gold Serve, Genesis Hotels & Group, Metts lants Arts, MGS Corp, Next Mobile Inc/Imex, Novellino/Growers, Powerbooks Specialty Store, Taytan International Corp Eastwood Property, and Vazbuilt. Suppliers includes Microdata System & Management Inc and EVI Distribution Phils Inc.

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LIFESTYLE

Editor **Chelo Banal-Formoso**

Better slow (carbs) but sure

"Eating white potatoes or white bread is just like eating candy as far as your body knows."

—Water Willet, *chair of nutrition, Harvard School of Public Health*

INSIDE OUT

Cory Quirino

IT IS to your health advantage to know the impact of food on your body. Recent discoveries reveal that sweets and starches have "surprisingly unpredictable effects on blood sugar."

This new thought has caused a revolution in the way carbohydrates are viewed, according to Jean Carper in "The Miracle Brain."

Fast carbs, slow carbs

Without a doubt, your body needs carbohydrates for energy. And your brain definitely needs a steady, regular supply of glucose from foods that raise your blood sugar levels slowly.

Sometimes, though, the brain needs a jolt to stimulate it to heights of productivity.

The evolutionary diet, an ancient "quick fix," is dates. But, once recommended to diabetics, studies show that dates send blood sugar soaring more quickly than refined sugar, sweets or any other food.

The best advice is to eat "slow" carbohydrates that are compatible with your health needs. Remember that your body, specifically "your brain, is totally dependent on the status of glucose in your blood." In short, depriving yourself of good carbs due to a diet fad will deprive your brain of its much needed fuel-glucose.

Fast carbs are high glycemic, meaning they produce "spikes and valleys" in blood sugar. In contrast, slow carbs that cause a gradual rise in glucose is low glycemic.

Here are more facts about carbohydrates:

Fast carbs impair weight loss, promote obesity and type 2 diabetes, depress good HDL cholesterol levels, lead to insulin resistance and promote high blood pressure

Low carbs maintain mental balance and health, raise good HDL cholesterol levels, prevent heart disease, stroke and diabetes and reverse insulin resistance.

10 ways to steady blood sugar

1. Know that starches (white potatoes, white flour/rice) can raise your blood sugar faster than eating candy. Pastas have low glycemic index (GI).
2. Eat legumes generously (beans, lentils, soy beans, peanuts).
3. Combine high GI food with low GI food (example: beans with rice). Snack on low GIs: apples, peanuts, popcorn.
4. Eat vegetables and nuts.
5. Limit processed foods like white bread, cookies, crackers, cereals (unless they are whole grain).
6. Add lemon juice or vinegar to your food to lower its glycemic index.
7. Eat small amounts and portions of food.
8. Eat your breakfast. Your blood sugar levels are lowest upon waking up and need replenishing. Take a carbo-protein combination like egg with whole grain bread and not white toast with jam. Old fashioned oatmeal is better than quick oats.
9. Take alpha lipoic acid. This supplement lowers blood sugar. For diabetics, 300-600 mg daily; for non-diabetic individuals, 50-100 mg daily
10. Take chromium supplements. For diabetics, 1,000 micrograms daily; non-diabetics, 200 micrograms

Sugar and children

While sweets may be a favorite of kids, know that sugar, when used to replace high-nutrient foods (like fruit), deprives the brain of its nourishment. Some children can be sensitive to sugar. PET (positron emission tomography) scans show that children's brains do not burn glucose as efficiently, which can lead to mood swings and hyperactivity. Tests show that children on high-sugar diets perform poorly in academics.

Bottomline

Try to keep your blood glucose at fairly normal levels to ensure good mood and good intellectual function. Choose low glycemic foods over high glycemic foods. Cut back on the sugar.

> The body, specifically the brain, is totally dependent on the status of glucose in the blood

Sugar as beauty aid

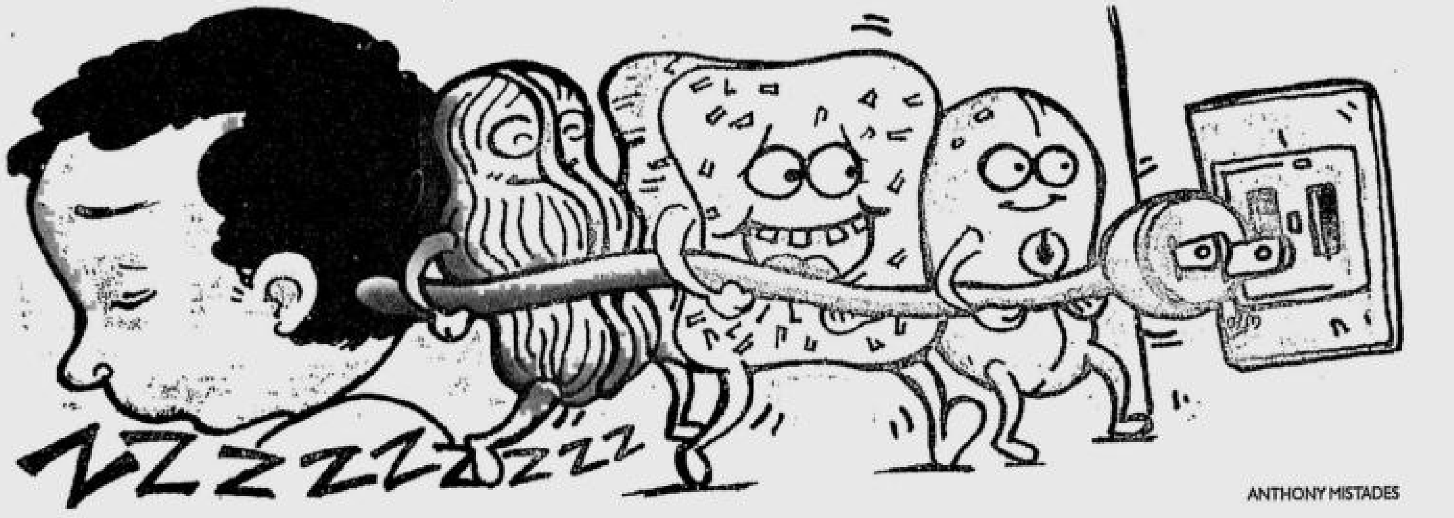
Externally, sugar makes for a good body and face scrub. Mix four tablespoons with your favorite oil (virgin coco oil, olive,), add a drop of aromatherapy oil (rose lavender) or squeeze ¼ of a lemon or orange. Scrub your body from toe to face. Follow with a milk wash (1 glass of fresh/canned milk; if powder, mix as in a drink) and smooth onto your skin. Shower after three minutes.

Sweet affirmation:

"I attract only sweetness in my life for I exude it."

Love and light!

Reference: Jean Carper "The Miracle Brain"



ANTHONY MISTADES

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Take Charge Doc!

I am a vegetarian and have heard that iron in plant food is less well absorbed than iron from meat. Is this true? How detrimental is this to my health?

Some vegetarians may have low iron stores due to lack of iron in their diet of cereals and vegetables. A good source of iron is red meat. The trend in eating less red meat may increase iron-deficiency anemia since iron has a vital role in transporting oxygen to the muscles and organs, including the brain. If the iron content in blood is low, a person may feel tired or may have little energy especially if it is less than 10 gram/dl. 12-16 gram/dl being the normal range. Vegetarians often have normal hemoglobin but have low iron stores or *ferritin* in their liver, muscles and bone marrow. Iron absorption is improved by including vitamin C in their diet, around 75 mg per meal or equivalent to 6 oz. of orange juice. As iron in non-meat foods such as vegetables are poorly absorbed, a vegetarian should eat dark green leafy vegetables, broccoli, legumes, yeast leavened whole grain bread, iron-enriched pasta, rice and cereal and meat analogs which are high in iron although not as absorbable as the iron found in meat.

It is not detrimental for a vegetarian to suffer iron-deficiency anemia as long as he or she is taking food rich in vitamin C (papaya, orange, broccoli, raw green peppers, grapefruit, strawberries, etc.) which can be as effective as meat meals in improving iron absorption.

This week's answer to our feature question on the importance of iron in plant food and meat was provided by our medical coordinator from MPI-Medical Center Muntinlupa, Dr. Jerry Castro. Doc Jerry specializes in Internal Medicine and has been in practice for 7 years. He had his medicine proper at MCU-Filemon D. Tanchoco Foundation Inc. and and earned his degree in 1992. He later had his residential training for a specialization in Internal Medicine in 1997. He is affiliated with several medical organizations such as the Philippine College of Physician, Philippine Thyroid Association and Philippine College of Occupational Medicine. MEDICard members may consult him for advice at MPI-Medical Center Muntinlupa, room 339, daily from 8am – 10am, Las Piñas Doctors Hospital, room 308, every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, from 5pm - 7pm or at the Associated Doctor's Clinic Corp., every Tuesday and Thursday from 3pm – 5pm.

MEDICard's Medical Director, Dr. Nicky Montoya answers questions on health through the assistance and expertise of MEDICard's network of accredited specialists. Write to Dr. Nicky or E-mail him at inquiry@medicardphils.com for your inquiries on health matters.

Nicky

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A True "Save Your Hair" Story from Svenson
BEFORE

She Found the Cure for her Hair Loss!

"When I was a child, I used a certain solution to treat my unhealthy scalp. As time went on, I lost so much hair that I almost became bald! I even wore a wig but was always teased because it looked fake. I just wanted to disappear because I couldn't stand the insults. My life completely changed: for many years, I became less confident and less active in dealing with people -- I couldn't be my normal self. But when I went to **Svenson**, I found hope for my hair loss. **Through their treatments, my hair started to re-grow with thicker strands.** As it grows longer, I'm starting to feel more confident again. I'm very happy that my hair is back to normal and I can finally be myself again. Svenson is my answered prayer for restoring my hair!"
- *Jennifer Callanta*

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CULTE Femme's Hindy Weber-Tantoco and Jun Escario

L'OREAL's luxury division GM Vicky Encarnacion with glam Mia Dragon-Floirendo

COVER girl Iza Calzado with newly appointed Marie-Claire editor in chief Myrza Sison

YOUNG, married and happy Nicole and Mannix Ortega

OUR town's hottest twosome: good-looker Richard Gutierrez and gorgeous Georgina Wilson

SISTERS 2: Chris Albert and Ana Bitong

Shu Uemura's eye-catching senior product manager Tessa Dragon, brilliant brand manager Tina Tinio; my *supah* pal Tim Yap and Preview's enchanting Pauline Suaco-Juan

AT the Shu Uemura Beauty Lounge: Isha Andaya, Agoo Bengzon, Rorie Carlos and Liz Uy

WELL-DRESSED Cristy Dragon-Locsin

OLGA Azarcon of Moët et Chandon that provided all the bubbly and other drinks, southern gent Tom Valderrama of Smart Infinity and Shu Uemura's chief makeup artist Xeng Zulueta

L'OREAL Phils.' managing director, trés *charmant* David Ennes, with Silk Cocoon's Frances Lim (left) and Anne Whiteford

The essence of beauty and luxury

MARION Balagot of HSBC, one of the sponsors of the affair, with E.J. Litton, mega concert producer and party organizer

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by Alex Van Hagen using Kodak EasyShare system

YES, *palanggas*, Shu Uemura teamed up with Smart Infinity to introduce a new concept in beauty and sheer luxury.

"Since it was founded in 1960, cosmetic brand Shu Uemura has always believed in beautiful skin, and the way to achieve it is by cleansing with the High Performance Balancing Cleansing Oil," explained Shu Uemura's brilliant spokesgal, **Tina Tinio**.

To bring the amazing cleansing oil to the attention of the public in a non-traditional way, Shu Uemura partnered with Smart Infinity in a series of fantastic events involving industry leaders, beauty junkies and Shu Uemura users.

From a cool cherry blossom afternoon tea product launch at the Drawing Room, to an Oscar-type chi-chi Beauty Lounge at Preview Magazine's fantastic 10th anniversary bash, Shu Uemura and Smart Infinity truly defined ultra luxury brands, *palanggas*.

Shu Uemura, collaborated for the first time with HG, a group of young talented Filipino artists, to produce "a complete visual and fashion concept that captured the essence of the Sakura Cleansing Oil Fresh" and made it Filipino in flavor. The result was astoundingly awesome, *palanggas*.

With live DJ sounds from Spin City, beauty stations gave guests their fill of Moët et Chandon, Bailey's, Smirnoff and Hennessy cocktails and the calorific so-yummy Ashmore's chocolates covered with strawberries, as they got their makeup done by Shu Uemura stylists.

At Smart's Infinity Beauty Lounge, Nail Spa therapists worked their magic on hands.

At the end of the session, invitees received travel beauty kits from Shu Uemura and souvenir photos of their visit. Definitely a major first in our town's party scene.

Making this fab happening a success were the brains behind the scenes like Shu Uemura's hot, hot business unit manager, Tina Tinio, no less, with Shu Uemura's rah-rah team: **Tessa Dragon**, makeup artist par excellence **Xeng Zulueta**, **Jigs Mayuga** and **Dione Cotoco**, together with HG's **Erwin Romulo**, **Yvonne Quisumbing-Romulo**, **Mads Adrian** and **Juan Caguicia**.

'Children's' party

It's a sad fact, *palanggas*, that every day, hundreds of poor children all over the world are abused and left to wander the streets. Some of them turn to crime, while a few lucky ones get help and solace from ABS-CBN's Bantay Bata 163 Foundation. This fantastic organization has helped free many children from the evils of domestic abuse and crime on the streets.

When the call came, tons of Cosmo Manille's more familiar faces dashed to the Bellevue Hotel in Alabang for a night of spectacular music, gourmet food, good wine and booze. Five hundred invitees rocked the floor to the fab sounds of three stupendous bands: 8 track, Flintstones and the Gang, and The Spirit of '67.

Sponsors were, as always, the kindhearted ones who help without batting an eyelash: Smart Infinity, Pepsi, BMW, The Heritage Park, Rockwell Land Corporation, HSBC, Rustan's Essenses, our very own Philippine Daily Inquirer, natch!; San Miguel Light, and the popular Fairways & Bluewater, which donated a special raffle prize. They all pitched to make the night a success.

EMD Electronics provided the lights and sounds that amazed the crowd and created a demand for its services.

Watching the crowd having a blast was a sign that this happening, superbly put together by the unmatchable party organizers and concert producers, cool couple **EJ Litton** and his multifaceted wife, pastry princess **Tess Aguado**, no less, *palanggas*, was a major success.

Well, people if you missed this fab evening of great sounds, stay cool! There's more to come!

Spotting 'em

First, it was raining cats and dogs. Next it was raining men, then it was raining big boys' toys, as in cars, and now it seems it's raining babies, would you believe?

There I was shopping for veggies at the popular Price Smart in The Fort, when first I bumped into the gorgeous **Dawn Zulueta**, all puffed-up and super happy over the imminent arrival of their first heir! "I've waited so long for this, and you can't imagine how fantastic Anton (her husband, witty businessman **Anton Lagdameo**) and I feel," she told me with her beautiful big smile. Before I could bat an eyelash, as *moi* was paying my bill, there she was, tall super headturner **Iya Guingona-Lagdameo**, who is close to the big day. She didn't gain the pounds most women get when they are at the last trimester of pregnancy, *n'est-ce pas*?

Then loud whispers blew my way from three of our town's stunningly beautiful society gals, who are also about to enter that merry stage of being mamas. They are happily in love with the respective papas to be, who are ecstatic over the coming of their heirs. But no plans of marriage... at least for now. Who knows? I have witnessed beautiful, long-time couples who finally said their "I do's" with their kids as part of the wedding entourage, usually when their cute toddlers are able to walk and they usually steal the show from their parents.

And surprise, surprise! Guess who's saying their "I do's"? Well, *palanggas*, it's none other than one of the country's most eligible and elusive bachelors, popular **Paulo Rufino Prieto**, no less, Inq7's cyber smart director, to pretty as a picture, eye-catcher **Ria Francisco**, beauty editor of Candy magazine. This whirlwind romance even caught me with my pants down (pardon the expression), *palanggas*.

But it seems when Paulo saw her the first time, he said, "This is it!" Wedding is set for sometime in September. Well, there goes another well-loved bachelor. Sorry, gals.

And, last Saturday, at the swinging Nuvo, where everyone who is anyone can be spotted, the President's daughter, brilliant, well-respected **Luli Arroyo** was there chilling. "With whom?" I asked her. She smiled and said some friends and a cousin.

"Oh, kissing cousins," I joked. "No Maurice, a real cousin," she said, laughing.

This is one Miss who definitely has an incredibly smart head on her shoulders.

ELUSIVE bachelor Paulo Prieto will say "I do's" with eye-catcher Ria Francisco.

EYE-CATCHERS Cecile Baguio and Victoria Castañeda

GANG of three: Southern gal Paz Sotto with Victoria Tuason and Marve Garcia

CLOSE pals: Cita Revilla Yabut with Christy Schultz and her husband, hotshot realtor Jorgie Bernasconi

POPULAR couple Jojo Keirulf and husband, entrepreneur Henry Zabarte

PRETTY Kimi Schultz Cojuangco and Gina Tabuena Godinez

SISTERS: Vivacious Roberta Lopez Feliciano and Bantay Bata's mega mover Gina Lopez

PRETTY as a picture Tara Litton with escort Migo Antonio

FUN couple Michelle and David Blue of BMW Philippines

NICOLE Santos and Angela Litton

NISSAN hotshot Nick Locsin and his wife, Lucille Carlos, with *palangga* Johnny Litton

Exercise machines with fur

WELL AND GOOD

Tina Juan

THE CURRENT love of my daughter's life (no offense to her boyfriend) is a black-and-white bundle of energy and affection called Lucy.

My daughter calls the one-and-a half-year old Boston terrier "sunshine with fur."

Lucy brought so much happiness to us that my daughter got another BT, a girl named Lilu, while my husband and I got a big stocky boy called Buddy.

Irresistible

Why do dogs (and other pets) make us feel so good? Is it because they are always happy to see you and never answer back? How can you resist a dog that wants only to please and follows you around?

A pet therapy article in HolisticOnline.com has several theories on the stress-reducing benefits of pets.

- While our interactions with people may be quite complex and unpredictable, animals provide a constant source of comfort.
- Animals bring out our nurturing instinct because we feel needed and responsible.
- Pets make us feel safe and unconditionally accepted.
- Pet ownership may affect people physiologically through the soothing and relaxing effect of touch.
- Speechless communication with a pet or simply watching a cat or fish may produce a relaxation response and may be an antidote to a foul mood or stressful day.

Health benefits

Research found that, though dogs were not the only ones that made people feel good, they were the most responsive.

- You don't have to own a pet to enjoy the health benefits. Oral surgery patients who watched a tank of fish before surgery were more relaxed than those who did not.
- Petting a dog can temporarily lower blood pressure and increase levels of serotonin, oxytocin, and prolactin—feel-good chemicals and hormones.
- A study at the University of California Los Angeles found that dog owners needed less medical care for stress-related conditions than non-dog owners.
- Another study found that having a pet increased the survival rate of heart attack victims more than the support of a spouse or friends.

But only people who enjoy having a pet reap health benefits. Those who don't like animals find their company stressful. The wrong kind of pet also causes more stress.

Overweight pets

Chubby dogs may look cute but they are not healthy. The National Academy of Sciences says, "An overweight dog is more likely to have arthritis, heart disease, cancer, diabetes, respiratory problems, pancreatitis, weakened immunity, anesthesia and surgical complications, and a shortened life."

But many owners don't realize their dogs have a weight problem. In a study of 200 dogs, 80 percent were found to be obese, yet 72 percent of owners felt their pets had the right weight or were underweight.

How do you tell a dog is fat? Veterinary nutrition expert Rebecca Remillard said the best way was to compare a dog's shape with pictures of dogs of ideal weight. A slim dog, even of stocky build, should have a visible "waist."

"Next, run your hands over the dog's ribs. If they're covered with a slight excess of fat and not easily felt, the dog is likely overweight. If the ribs are difficult or impossible to feel through the fat, it is likely obese."

Dogs and people become overweight for basically the same reasons: too much food and not enough exercise.

A tired dog is a good dog.

Regular exercise won't just help a dog to be trim and healthy but also make him better-behaved. In "Pet Aerobics," professional animal trainers Warren and Fay Eckstein write, "Nearly every behavioral problem we have encountered... is directly attributable to lack of exercise."

The Ecksteins say exercise can cure such problems as furniture chewing, biting, car chasing, hole digging and excessive barking.

Dr. Rolan Tripp, author of "Pet Perception Management," recommends a minimum of walking one city block per 10 pounds of body weight daily. So a 60-pound dog needs to walk at least six blocks every day. Another formula is 20-30 minutes of exercise four to five times a week.

Furry machines

The American Council on Exercise (ACE) calls dogs "exercise machines with fur." Dogs can help you get fit if you exercise with them. Taking a dog for a daily afternoon walk can help an overweight youngster or teenager lose weight without feeling that exercise is punishment.

Aside from walking with your dog, you can also take him for a walk or run while you ride a bike or roller skate. Remember that dogs, especially those with long hair and/or short snouts, overheat easily. Exercise in the early morning or late afternoon. Give enough water before, during and after workout.

You can learn a lot from dogs.

They are just like people when it comes to losing weight. Both have to drop excess pounds slowly and safely. Nutrition authority Jean Carper recommends cutting doggie calories by 25 percent if your pet is overweight. She cites research showing dogs do best when they lose only slightly more than one percent of body weight a week, about three to four ounces for a 20-pound dog.

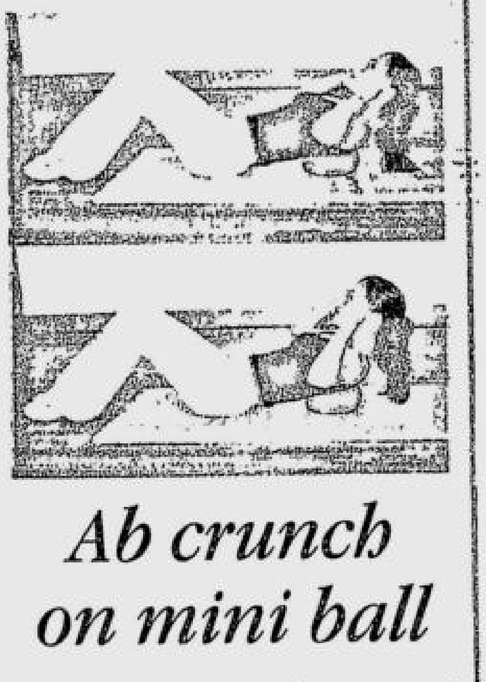
If your dog is obese (weighs more than 20 percent of normal), a veterinarian may prescribe weight-loss foods. Carper advises owners to be patient. No crash diets or instant weight loss. She says it can take 18 months for an obese dog to regain a normal figure safely.

My daughter says dogs can also make us better people. She writes in her blog (www.calamansi.blogspot.com), "They forgive easily, they are loyal, they take each day as it comes, they love with all their being and, if all else fails, they just look cute."

Note: Paul de Leon of Promised Land Kennels (tel. 0917-6039401) is one of the best breeders of Boston terriers.

Visit www.tinajuanfitness.info

EXERCISE OF THE WEEK



Ab crunch on mini ball

THIS exercise firms and strengthens abdominal muscles.

Equipment:

Exercise mat and small rubber ball

Exercise technique:

1. Place the mini ball behind your shoulder blades.
2. Legs should be hip distance apart with hands behind your head.
3. Pull your waist towards the floor and tilt your pelvis as you curl your torso up.
4. Slowly return to the starting position.
5. Do the desired number of repetitions.

Performance tips:

1. Exhale as you curl; inhale on the return.
2. Avoid clasping your hands behind your head so you don't pull on your neck.

Repetitions:

10 repetitions.

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